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ABSTRACT

The guide is one section of a resource kit designed to assist Peace Corps language instruction coordinators in countries around the world in understanding the principles underlying second language learning and teaching and in organizing instructional programs. This section is concerned with in-service and independent language training at the overseas post. An introductory chapter gives an overview of the guide, with suggestions for identifying ongoing language learning needs for the post and a schedule for related activities. The second chapter focuses on administration of in-service and other training events, including planning and logistics, needs assessments, program design, evaluation, and final reports. Subsequent chapters address issues concerning: tutors and language informants (common challenges in tutoring situations, guidelines for tutoring, and sample practice activities) with illustrations from the field; use and design of language newsletters; and self-directed/independent learning, including learning techniques, self-assessment techniques, language learning strategies, and sample independent lessons for pre-service training. (MSE)

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**LANGUAGE
COORDINATORS
RESOURCE
KIT**

SECTION SIX

ONGOING LANGUAGE LEARNING



Peace Corps
Information Collection and Exchange (ICE)
ICE Publication Number TOO96
February 1998

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SECTION SIX

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OVER VIEW

SECTION SIX: ONGOING LANGUAGE LEARNING

ONGOING LANGUAGE LEARNING

Language learning is not something that ends when PCVs are sworn in and sent to their sites. It is an ongoing process that is still only just beginning at the end of PST. In addition to setting up the PST language training, most Language Coordinators must also set up systems to support continued language learning.

This involves both integrating strategies training for independent language learning into your PST design and also setting up other systems to assist PCVs in continuing this process at their sites. This section discusses methods that Peace Corps has developed to encourage and assist PCVs in continuing their language study both formally and informally after PST.

IST DESIGN

Language Coordinators are responsible for designing Language ISTs to continue PCVs formal language study. Typically these occur from 3-6 months after PCVs are sworn-in, and focus on technical language needs that PCVs have identified as necessary for their jobs. Peace Corps countries have developed a wide range of IST designs to meet an equally wide range of PCV needs.

TUTORING SYSTEMS

Many Language Coordinators are also responsible for setting up and monitoring the system of monitoring tutors and reimbursing PCVs for paid language tutors or language informants at their sites. Support involves not only defining policies and establishing logistical systems, but also providing guidance and direction for both PCVs and Tutors that will maximize the language learning potential.

LANGUAGE NEWSLETTERS

Many Language Coordinators write a regular column in the PCV Newsletter as a way to maintain attention to language learning after PCVs are sworn in. In some countries, posts distribute a separate language newsletter with materials for ongoing study, suggestions for independent learning, and motivational materials such as jokes, songs, and cultural information.

LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES AND SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING

Many PCVs are really learning a second language for the first time in their lives, and don't have a lot of information or experience in identifying effective strategies and techniques. Many PCVs are assigned to sites where it is difficult to find tutors with formal training in language teaching, or understanding of the structure of their own language.

For these reasons, a major responsibility for Language Coordinators is to develop training sessions and support materials to help PCVs identify and use effective strategies for self-directed learning. Peace Corps has developed a number of useful methods for fostering awareness of the issues and techniques for self-directed learning.

TIPS FROM LANGUAGE CO- ORDINATORS

Language Coordinators have developed this list of suggestions for ways to encourage ongoing language learning at your post.

During PST:

- Start integration of strategy training early in PST.
- Administer the Strategy Inventory For Language Learning (SILL), but no sooner than the third week of classes.
- Allow time during PST when Trainees can talk in English about how they learn (use current PCVs).
- Give Trainees the opportunity to assess own needs and set their own goals, but provide structure and practice in doing this. i.e. - Have Trainees co-plan lessons with instructors.
- Build independent study time into schedule.
- Have Trainees read about and attend sessions on language learning.
- Include listening tasks and practice with learning logs in community assignments.

After PST:

- Revisit the points above during ISTs, and include tips and stories in the Language Newsletter.
- Use "non-language" training events (mid-service or technical ISTs) to support continuing language learning.
- Work with counterparts, so they understand their role in supporting PCVs continued language learning.
- Ensure that the PC Staff understands all three language learning goals.

WHAT THIS SECTION CONTAINS

- Provide reference materials, and help PCVs access materials.
- Encourage PCVs to seek out tutors or language helpers.

This section contains an overview of activities that support ongoing language learning.

About ISTs:

- basic issues and general considerations for IST design
- models of various kinds of ISTs and activities often included
- guidelines and samples of evaluation techniques for the ISTs
- guidelines and samples of IST Final reports

About Tutors:

- basic issues and general considerations for using tutors and language informants
- guidelines and samples of informational materials about tutoring
- sample forms and systems for monitoring the tutoring process

About Newsletters:

- guidelines and samples of materials for language newsletters or columns in the PCV newsletter

About Self-Directed Language Learning:

- basic issues and general considerations for self directed language learning
- descriptions of various activities and techniques for self-directed language-learning
- systems for self-assessment of language proficiency
- information about and training sessions for learning strategies training
- training session plan to identify individual learning styles

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE

IDENTIFYING ONGOING LANGUAGE LEARNING NEEDS FOR YOUR POST

Every post has different needs for supporting on-going language learning after the PST. In some countries, post-PST language training systems such as tutoring programs, language newsletters, and integrated systems for IST training design are well-established. In other countries such systems are less-well developed. Moreover, newly emerging models of training such as Community-Based Training are placing an even greater need for systems to promote learner autonomy and responsibility, and require that these issues be integrated into the PST curriculum as well. Unfortunately self-directed language learning is a new area for language learning in general, so there are few models to look at.

In order to help you assess what things need to be done in your program, Peace Corps Language Coordinators developed this brief checklist to help you determine what needs you have in your program in relation to some of the issues involved in ongoing language learning. For each of the items below, select the letter of the response that best describes the situation at your post:

- A. Completed successfully
- B. Completed, but needs revision
- C. Not completed, and it needs to be done
- D. Not completed, but not important at present

Items that you marked with a B or C will probably need further development.

ON GOING LANGUAGE LEARNING DEVELOPMENT NEEDS

- _____ 1. Information, session plans, materials and systems to support PCVs in selecting and working with language informants or tutors
- _____ 2. Systems to monitor PCVs ongoing learning plan with tutors and provide reimbursement
- _____ 3. Clear guidelines about policies and logistical resources for ongoing language learning (how much tutors can be paid, how many hours a PCV may claim for reimbursement, time-limits effecting tutoring reimbursement, etc.)
- _____ 4. A variety of designs for sessions at both PST and IST that outline and practice self-directed language learning techniques and strategies.
- _____ 5. A variety of materials that explain and practice effective language learning strategies, techniques for self-assessment, and specific techniques and strategies for self-directed and non-classroom language learning
- _____ 6. A format and materials for a language newsletter or "language column" in the PCV newsletter that provides additional information about the language and encourages continued language learning

TIME LINE

SUGGESTED SCHEDULE FOR ACTIVITIES TO PROMOTE INDEPENDENT LANGUAGE LEARNING

Peace Corps Language Coordinators have developed this suggested timeline for introducing strategies and activities that promote independent language learning.

TIMELINE FOR INDEPENDENT LEARNING ACTIVITIES

BEFORE TRAINEES ARRIVAL FOR PST	• Provide Trainees/invitees with reading material about how to learn a language. • Send Trainees information about your language. • Send copies of "Language Learning Strategies for Peace Corps Volunteers." • Write the goals of language program in consultation with other staff and share them with invitees. • Establish that learning the language is an expectation of all PCVs. • Suggest that Trainees buy and bring a bilingual dictionary and a tape recorder to help them in their language learning.
SOON AFTER ARRIVAL	• Introduce the language program including a review of the goals of the language training program and material from "Language Learning Strategies for Peace Corps Volunteers." • Explain to Trainees why Peace Corps emphasizes learning the local language (second Peace Corps goal) even when English is widely used. • After a week of class, administer a Learning Style Inventory to help Trainees reflect on their preferred ways of learning.

EARLY IN PST (WEEKS 1-3)	• Administer the SILL. • Have Trainees help decide the rules in the language class or training, such as Spanish Only hours or a table at lunch. They should help decide on how the rules will be enforced. • Offer Trainees a choice of which type of class group to be in (on- going). This could be based on their preference for a fast or slow pace, their perception of their own level, or their need for more or less emphasis on grammar. • Have language instructors mention strategies (memorization techniques, rewards, etc.) in the daily classes (on-going). • Hold weekly 15-minute meetings to discuss use of language learning strategies (on-going). • Have Trainees set their own language learning goals. • Distribute dictionaries; provide practice in how to use. • Explain and give practice in using a learning log or journal. • Have teachers discuss strategies they are using with Trainees.
DURING PST (WEEKS 4-9)	• Help Trainees learn how to organize their language lessons. • Have Trainees assist teachers in planning classes. • Have Trainees help decide what topics they'll study—either open- ended or a choice from a few options. • Review language program goals with Trainees. • Assess Trainees' independent learning skills. • Help Trainees learn how to select and work with a tutor. • Have Trainees practice self-assessment. • Give Trainees an orientation to useful materials in the Resource Center or Training Library.
NEAR THE END OF PST (WEEKS 10-12)	• Have Trainees organize their own language lessons. • Develop or purchase and distribute self-study materials. • Give Trainees practice working with a tutor. • Assess Trainees' independent learning skills. • Have Trainees develop plan for continuing language learning, with language learning goals and action plan. • Have Trainees practice self-assessment.
DURING MONTHS 1-4 OF PCV SERVICE/AT IST	• Have Trainees monitor and revise their progress on language learning goals. • Conduct a needs assessment and hold language IST with sessions on self-directed learning and effective use of tutors and tape recorders. • Visit PCVs at site to see how they are progressing. • Support tutoring program. • Keep in touch with PCVs through telephone and mail. • Include language learning tips and stories in PCV newsletter. • Assess effectiveness of independent learning support given during PST.

OVER VIEW

LANGUAGE IST ISSUES AND CONCERNS

The following issues and concerns should be considered as you design ISTs for your post.

GOALS OF IST

Many posts report great benefits of holding a language IST, usually two or three months after Volunteers have been sworn in. At this point, PCVs' motivation is usually high, they have formed a clearer picture of their needs in the language and have a considerable amount of language learning experience to reflect on. The language IST should be designed to meet the same general goals as the PST language program:

- achievement of specific competencies,
- enhancement of general proficiency level, and
- development of language learning skills.

OVERALL DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

In working toward these three goals, the language coordinator needs to consider the needs of the Volunteers, as determined by a needs assessment questionnaire (along with site visits, interviews or other means), the relevance of various aspects of the systems of the language that could be covered, and the ongoing learning situation of the Volunteers. The result should be a training event that gives the PCVs options and variety, while including:

- sessions on handling specific tasks and situations, especially work-related or social ones that were too difficult for beginners,
- exercises, explanations, and activities that increase command of the grammar, writing, and sound systems, and
- other sessions that involve reflection on language learning and skill development in becoming better learners.

All language ISTs should include at least one session during which PCVs share language learning experiences and learning tips and strategies. The area of evaluation is also important. Consider administering a Peace Corps LPI during the IST, especially if it is a long one. And don't forget to evaluate the IST.

OTHER QUESTIONS TO ASK

The questions below may be helpful in planning a language IST and deciding how to balance the content among the three goal-related areas, so the language coordinator can begin to address the resulting preparation tasks and logistical considerations.

1. WHICH LANGUAGE?

Is the focus of the IST on the one language that was studied during Pre-Service Training or is the focus to be on a "secondary" language that was only introduced for a few weeks during pre-service training? Or will both be offered for different Volunteers? The Language Coordinator needs to look at what was covered already and make guesses about the progress made since PST.

2. WHAT PROFICIENCY LEVEL?

Note that beginners are less likely to want to focus on the process of learning, but they may be willing to try learning strategies they have used in another language.

3. SPECIFIC NEEDS

What does the PCV need to use the language for? In what situations and with whom? Instructors need to try to plan lessons to help PCVs manage the most important communication areas, and these need to be described in terms of setting, purpose etc. so that the content will be as relevant as possible and the cultural dimension can be integrated. A needs assessment questionnaire should be sent out to PCVs well ahead of the IST to gather this information, and this can be supplemented by interviews with Volunteers, APCDs and others who may have useful observations.

4. WHAT ABOUT GRAMMAR?

The situation is about the same as in PST. Influenced by their academic language learning experiences in the U.S. and feeling frustrated at their limited command of the new language, PCVs may have an exaggerated idea of how important it is to study aspects of grammar. There are a couple of guidelines to keep in mind.

- First is that new material must be practiced in order to be learned, so the number of grammar points to be covered must be limited.
- Second, grammar, like vocabulary and pronunciation, is best seen as a means to an end. Grammar explanations and practice activities should be linked to a real life communication purpose, one for which greater accuracy or use of more complex structures is important.

5. STAFFING

Are there skilled, experienced teachers of this language who can be hired for the IST? If not, can you begin developing a group of them? IST language instructors may be "groomed" for PST positions later on.

6. FIELD REALITY

What is the continuing language learning situation of the PCVs in the field? What are the skills of the tutors that the PCVs are using in the field? Are they trained teachers or just informants? In other words, how much management of their own learning must the Volunteers take on?

7. SUPPORT FOR CONTINUED LEARNING

What areas related to continuing language learning might benefit Volunteers? Are there areas that were introduced during PST that need review or expansion? How about areas that need to be addressed for the first time now?

- Orientation and practice in using resources, such as dictionaries and grammar reference books
- Tips and techniques for working with a tutor or informant
- Practice in using a tape recorder
- Organizing your learning: How to plan, monitor and evaluate your own learning
- Language learning strategies for comprehending and remembering
- Information about language and communication, as in Chapter Five of *How To Be a More Successful Language Learner* or Chapter One of *Language Learning Strategies for PCVs*
- Sharing tips and experiences

8. USING THE PRINTED WORD

What is the importance of the written form of the language in supporting continuing learning? Can PCVs use newspapers or other written materials to practice with at their sites?

9. LANGUAGE DIFFICULTY

How difficult is this language likely to be for Volunteers in the field?

- Is it a pidgin or Creole language? Is it a Romance language or one that has a lot of cognates with English?
- Does the language have a written form, and if so, how widely used is it? How closely does the written form relate to the spoken form of the language? Does the written form use a non-Roman alphabet?

10. IST RESULTS

Can this language IST result in useful products? Can you begin gathering material for handouts or booklets on The Most Common Errors or The Most Frequently Asked Questions? Can some of the material be a start for tech-related language materials or lessons in PST? Could the IST generate new ideas for supporting continued language learning, including IST design?

HOW TO DO IT

LOGISTICAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR ISTS

In many posts the Language Coordinator is responsible not only for designing and conducting the IST, but for making all the necessary logistics arrangements as well. Language Coordinators have provided these logistical suggestions.

SELECTING A SITE

- The training site should provide the facilities needed for training e.g. conference rooms, study hall, space for classes or classrooms, enough tables, chairs, etc. and space for other language training activities like simulations, role plays and skits.
- The training site should be accessible by host families.
- Check that the training conference is suitable in terms of:
 - size (the number of people attending the IST, big enough to provide space for small group activities and all-group activities),
 - light,
 - location in town (easy access to public transportation, close enough to PC office in cases where something is needed to be delivered from the office),
 - location close to places where participants may have lunches (in case PC is not providing them),
 - nice areas for recreation in breaks, and
 - make sure it is not at a place which is too noisy.

OBTAINING SUPPLIES

- When preparing a list of supplies/materials, specify kind, size, color (for paper, pens, pencils, markers), and number to enable the Admin. unit to provide you with what is really needed.
- Check that you have everything you need at the training site before the start of IST: enough chairs, tables. These may also include supplies, equipment, handouts, books, etc. Check all equipment as to their usability. Are they working well? Are they on the right voltage?
- Check with the Admin whether everything on your Supplies list has been provided and make sure that all the supplies are transported to the training site one day prior to IST or at

least a couple of hours before you start (because of the availability of the training site) so that you can have the conference room set up.

TYPICAL SUPPLIES NEEDED FOR LANGUAGE IST

The specific supplies you need will, of course depend on a number of variables, such as number of participants, budget available, goals of the IST, and what kinds of supplies you might have left over from the PST. When identifying and organizing needed supplies it's useful to consider three basic categories: hardware (TV/video, newsprint, markers, white board etc.); participant supplies (notebooks, pens, lang. folders, needs assessment survey report, IST schedule, etc.); and trainer resources such as IST manuals and reference books, etc.) This list of supplies is for an IST for 40 participants:

SAMPLE IST SUPPLY LIST		
HARDWARE	PARTICIPANT SUPPLIES	OTHER SUPPLIES
computer - 1 diskettes printer - 1 extension cords - 2 photocopier - 1 copy paper - 1 box TV set video camera video cassette recorder video cassettes- 5 audio taperecorder(s) audio cassettes - 10 flipchart stands - 6 flipchart paper - 3 pads markers - (different colors) 25 colored pencils - several sets	pens - 40 notebooks - 40 (small, 40 sheets)	folders rulers colored pencils colored paper scissors - 4 highlighters - 5 staplers - 2 staples - 1 box glue - 3 pencils - 4 - 5 scotch tape - 6 rolls paper clips - different sizes cardboard paper (white) - 10 sheets

SAMPLES FROM THE FIELD

IST PLANNING CHECKLIST

This planning checklist was developed for an IST in Nepal to help identify when various logistical arrangements need to be made.

IST TIMELINE	
THREE TO FOUR MONTHS BEFORE THE EVENT	• Determine IST site and make necessary arrangements. • Memo to PCVs with dates and need assessment
SIX WEEKS BEFORE THE EVENT	• Memo to PCVs with site, confirmed dates, and typical daily schedule • Notification of language staff • Request vehicle - if necessary.
TWO TO THREE WEEKS BEFORE THE EVENT	• Summarize results. • Organize language materials. • List necessary materials and handouts.
ONE WEEK BEFORE THE EVENT	• Language staff list to country director for approval • Language staff preparation begins. • Memo to PCVs containing last -minute information • Organize necessary handouts and materials. • Make all necessary copies. • Pack boxes.
THE DAY BEFORE THE EVENT	• Go over the materials checklist. • Load boxes.

SAMPLES FROM THE FIELD

IST NEEDS ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

This needs assessment form was developed for an IST in Romania. Note that in addition to questions about specific topics Volunteers would like to see covered, it also asks questions about situations for language use, Volunteers' self-assessment and what they are doing about on-going language learning

Needs Assessment for Language IST

(Please briefly answer the following questions to help us plan the event)

Date: _____
From: _____
Sector: _____

1. Here is a list of topics included in the IST Language Manual. In case you want to study from it, please rank the choices below using 1 for the most preferred:

- _____ Life of a PCV in Romania
- _____ The Romanian Family
- _____ The Romanian Mentality
- _____ Slang
- _____ Human Nature
- _____ Social and Political Issues
- _____ Romanian Thought
- _____ Romanian Literature

If you are interested in other topics, please identify which :

2. What cultural/cross-cultural issues do you want to be addressed in the upcoming Language IST? Please be specific.

3. Please identify, in general, your job-related language training needs, i.e., Do you need to speak Romanian 6 hours a day at the office, or one hour per week only? Do you need Romanian to talk to clients or at a meeting, etc.?

4. Please list specific areas you would like to be addressed at the Language IST for your language improvement in communicating in the work setting. What kinds of things do you need to be able to say/understand?

5. Here are activities we are considering for the Language IST. Please rank the choices below using 1 for the most preferred:

- _____ Conversation Activities
- _____ Pronunciation Exercises
- _____ Listening Activities
- _____ Explanation and Practice of Grammar Rules
- _____ Reading Practice
- _____ Writing Practice
- _____ Technical Language
- _____ Other (*Please specify what*)

6. List specific grammar areas to be covered during IST sessions.

7. List 4 or 5 real-life situations in which you wished you had used Romanian to communicate but you were not able to. Please be specific about where this was, with whom you wanted to communicate in Romanian, what exactly you wanted to talk about.

8. Rate your current level of Romanian on the following scale:

- 1 - unable to understand and communicate at all
- 2 - able to communicate on limited survival level
- 3 - able to speak and communicate with certain limits in any situation
- 4 - feel comfortable in using Romanian in most situations

9. Rate your current level of using Romanian in a job specific setting (i.e. rate the technical language competencies you are able to perform):

- 1 - unable to understand and communicate at all
- 2 - able to communicate on limited level
- 3- feel comfortable in using Romanian in most working situations

10. Do you have a language tutor? _____ Yes _____ No

How many hours per week do you study with a tutor? _____
What textbooks / materials / resources do you use? _____

11. Do you study on your own? _____ Yes _____ No

How many hours per week do you study? _____
What textbooks / materials / resources do you use? _____

12. Other suggestions to help us plan a useful IST :

SUGGESTIONS FROM LANGUAGE COORDINATORS

- Give PCVs an opportunity to assess own needs and set their own goals but provide structure and practice in doing this. (i.e. Have PCVs co-plan lessons with instructors.)
- In your needs assessment ask the participants about the kind of process to be used in the IST delivery (open space, structured sessions, work groups to produce or research different projects/plans.)
- If possible, share results of the needs assessment with the group before they arrive or at the beginning of the IST. This will give the Volunteers an opportunity to prepare materials which they might need.

SAMPLES FROM THE FIELD

IST GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Language ISTs have the same general goals as the PST language program: achievement of specific competencies, enhancement of general proficiency level, and development of language learning skills. But you may wish to develop more specific and focused objectives. Typically these are formulated after the results of the IST needs assessment have been collected and analyzed. Here are the goals that were developed for an IST from the sample needs assessment that was developed by Peace Corps Romania.

LANGUAGE IST GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

GOAL: To provide an opportunity for the PCVs to speak Romanian and to improve their language skills

OBJECTIVES : By the end of the IST, the PCVs will be able to :

- Review Romanian language competencies
- Use vocabulary and functions beyond survival needs.
- Meet individual needs.
- Expand on and use work-related language.
- Design a plan for continuation of language learning back at one's site.
- Demonstrate appropriate behavior in various cross - cultural situations .
- Evaluate overall language knowledge.

SAMPLES FROM THE FIELD

SAMPLE IST SCHEDULES

The length and schedule of your IST will, like any other training event discussed in this manual depend on such matters as logistics and available resources and. Thus, ISTs may vary in length from a single day to a couple of weeks in duration. Here are two sample schedules for a five-day and a one-day IST. This first schedule was developed for a five-day IST in Romania (sample goals and needs assessment questionnaire for this event are included above). Volunteers traveled to the site on Monday and returned to their posts on Sunday.

FIVE DAY IST				
Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
8:15- 8:30 <i>Check-in</i> 8:30-10:30 <i>Romanian</i> <i>Traditions</i> 10:30-11:00 <i>Break</i> 11:00-12:00 <i>Language</i> <i>OPTIONAL</i> 12:00-1:00 <i>Admin. Per diem &</i> <i>Travel Reimburse</i>	8:15- 8:30 <i>Check-in</i> 8:30-10:30 <i>Language</i> <i>LESSON 7</i> 10:30-11:00 <i>Break</i> 11:00-12:30 <i>Language</i> <i>OPTIONAL</i>	8:15- 8:30 <i>Check-in</i> 8:30-10:30 <i>Language</i> <i>LESSON 6</i> 10:30-11:00 <i>Break</i> 11:00-12:30 <i>Language</i> <i>OPTIONAL</i>	8:15- 8:30 <i>Check-in</i> 8:30-10:30 <i>Language</i> <i>LESSON 3</i> 10:30-11:00 <i>Break</i> 11:00-12:30 <i>Language</i> <i>OPTIONAL</i>	8:15- 8:30 <i>Check-in</i> 8:30-10:30 <i>Language</i> <i>ROUND-UP</i> 10:30-11:00 <i>Break</i> 11:00-12:30 <i>Language</i> <i>Evaluation-interviews</i>
L	U	N	C	H
2:00-3:30 <i>Technical</i> <i>Language</i> 3:30- 3:45 <i>Break</i> 3:45- 5:15 <i>Community</i> <i>Mtg w/CD</i>	2:00-4:00 <i>Technical</i> <i>Language</i> 4:00-4:15 <i>Break</i> 4:15-5:30 <i>Sector Meetings:</i> <i>SBD -Speaker</i> <i>SW -Meeting with</i> <i>PCV's</i> <i>TEFL-Library Visit</i>	AFTERNOON FREE	2:00-3:15 <i>Technical</i> <i>Language</i> 3:15-3:30 <i>Break</i> 3:30-5:00 <i>Medical</i>	2:00- 3:30 <i>Language</i> <i>Evaluation</i> <i>Interviews</i> 3:30- 3:45 <i>Break</i> 3:45- 5:00 <i>Closure-</i> <i>IST-Evaluation-</i> 4:00 - on <i>Party at CD's</i> <i>House</i>

The second schedule is for a one-day IST that was held in Moldova. It was designed to mirror events in the national elections, which were being held around the same time as the IST. It was one of several "Language Weekends" that were scheduled throughout the year.

**Language Weekend
PC Moldova, Chisinau
The Great Electoral Campaign**

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| 9.00-9.15 | Welcome and orientation (together) |
| 9.15-10.00 | Parties' conferences (divide into two groups)
- choosing the name
- designing party's symbol
- designing party's program in:
- political area
- economical area
- socio-cultural aspects
- educational system
- international relations |
| 10.00-11.00 | Electoral Debate (together)
1. Candidates - present their party's program
2. "Managers" - "advertise" their candidate
3. Electors - agree with their team, disagree with the "oppositions" |
| 11.00-11.30 | Starting a New Civilization (two groups) |
| 11.00-12.00 | Reading for fun |
| 12.00-1.00 | LUNCH (together) |
| 1.00-2.00 | Answering questions |
| 2.00-2.30 | Grammar |
| 2.30-3.00 | Feedback/Evaluation |

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

SELECTING SUCCESSFUL IST ACTIVITIES

WHERE TO FIND ACTIVITIES

Many of the activities that you will want to use for PST are also useful for ISTs as well and are discussed elsewhere in this Resource Kit. Refer to Section 5 (Principles of Learning and Teaching) for lists of general language learning and practice activities as well as bibliographies listing other teacher resource materials that are available from Peace Corps Washington, the in-country resource center, or the training library at your post. Information later in this section includes session designs for strategies training and self-directed language learning.

FACTORS TO CONSIDER WHEN SELECTING ACTIVITIES

Posts usually develop their own lists of favorite techniques and practice activities, but no single set of activities will work equally well for every IST (or even for every grouping within a single IST). Deciding which activities will be the most successful for your program can be a challenging job for Language Coordinators who lack experience with Peace Corps training. In Section 8 (PST) some of the general considerations of choosing specific activities are discussed in detail. Refer to that information for a more detailed discussion of the issues that need to be considered when choosing activities for any training design.

SAMPLES FROM THE FIELD

EFFECTIVE IST ACTIVITIES

This is a list of activities that teachers found especially effective at an IST in the Philippines. Remember, though, that a list that would be developed by and for your program will probably be different. Detailed descriptions of these practice activities can be found in Section 5 (Principles of Learning and Teaching) of this Resource Kit.

Effective General Language Activities

- Pictionary
- Charade
- Association Game
- The Last Word is Mine
- Hangman

Effective Group Activities

- Grammar Sessions
- Message Relay
- Cocktail Party
- Songs
- Culture Discussion

Effective Individual (one-on-one: tutor/student) Activities

- Praxeogram
- Treasure Island
- Daily Teaching Cycle (LAMP)
- Celebrity Game
- Diagnostic Tests
- Paper Bag Charade
- Shop Talk
- Drills
 - Transformation
 - Expansion
- Constructalogue
- Grammar Sessions
- Information Gap
- Picture Study

HOW TO DO IT

EVALUATING ISTS

WHY EVALUATE?

Like other training events, ISTs should include a formal evaluation by the participants. Elsewhere in this Resource Kit we discuss the reasons why evaluation is important in more detail, and in particular its usefulness in refining and improving training design.

WHAT TO EVALUATE?

Typically workshop evaluation forms ask for participant feedback on the usefulness of specific sessions and the overall organization of the IST. In Section 3 (Curriculum Development) there is a discussion of the general guidelines offered by the *PATS Training Supplement* on the kinds of information (about content, process, management and outcomes) that your evaluation should be designed to elicit. You should review that information before designing an evaluation form for your own IST. But remember that you will also want to design an evaluation form and process that will get the kinds of information that you consider most necessary for your specific needs. The scope and organization of your evaluation will, thus, depend on what you want to know about the effectiveness of your particular event. For example, if you held the training at a new site you would probably include questions on how the participants felt about the logistical arrangements and the location of the event. If you increased the length of the IST from three to five days, you would probably want to know how participants felt about the new schedule.

HOW TO EVALUATE?

The pros and cons of various program assessment instruments (open-ended responses vs. numerical ratings, written form vs. oral interview, etc.) are discussed at length in other sections of this Resource Kit (in the discussions of Needs Assessment and Curriculum Evaluation in Section 3 (Curriculum Development), and in Section 7 (Assessment)). You may want to review those sections before deciding on a final format for your own evaluation. Whichever system you choose, you should strive for one that is easy to administer and to analyze, and that elicits useful information for redesign and improvement of future ISTs.

SAMPLES FROM THE FIELD

SAMPLE IST EVALUATION FORM

This is a general IST evaluation developed by Peace Corps Romania. Note the mix of numerical ratings and open-ended questions. Note also that the evaluation not only assesses effectiveness of the IST, but also asks Volunteers to reflect on how they will continue to use the information back at their sites. As with many of the forms included in this manual, the space provided for participant responses should be larger than shown here.

PCV's name (optional) _____

Language IST Evaluation

	<i>Disagree</i>				<i>Agree</i>
1. IST was well organized.	1	2	3	4	5
2. IST goals and objectives were clear.	1	2	3	4	5
3. IST fully met the stated goals/ objectives.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Content of the IST met my needs.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Materials were useful.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Grouping and teaching style were effective.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I felt I was encouraged to participate fully.	1	2	3	4	5
8. My attendance at IST will prove beneficial.	1	2	3	4	5

Comments:

9. I liked the following two (three) sessions:
because:

10. Other things I liked about the IST were :

11. I did not like the following two (three) sessions:
because:

12. Other things I didn't like about the IST were :

13. I would like to make the following suggestions for future ISTs:

14. After returning to my site, I am planning to follow up on areas covered in the IST in these ways :

HOW TO DO IT

IST FINAL REPORTING GUIDELINES

PURPOSES OF A FINAL REPORT

A final report of your IST is an important document. It records how the training was organized, what worked well and what didn't, and what particular recommendations you have for future training events. Although the final reports for ISTs are generally not as extensive as those for PST, they are still extremely valuable in improving your training design. A number of final reports from different kinds of ISTs are included on the CD-ROM that accompanies this manual. They are an excellent source of information on different kinds of program designs.

FINAL REPORT FORMAT AND IST PLANNING

To prepare the IST report, it's important to set up a procedure for recording session designs and, in particular, making comments about their effectiveness and any recommended changes **while** you are conducting the IST. Although this initial evaluation is from the trainer's perspective, it still provides important information for others who might want to replicate or revise the session. While session descriptions may not appear in their full form as part of your final report, they are nonetheless important. You can integrate information from participant evaluations at a later stage. Other typical contents, (such as a workshop overview, descriptions or schedules) will need to be part of your IST preparation process, so compiling the report should be neither difficult nor time consuming.

BASIC ELEMENTS OF IST FINAL REPORTS

Report formats vary from post to post, but, most contain:

- Information on where the IST was conducted, how long, etc.
- Description of training staff and participants (number, background, required skills, etc.)
- Overview of IST goals and objectives
- Information on sessions and schedule (the basic design of the event, number of days, etc.)
- Summary of participant evaluations
- Recommendations for follow-up training for this specific group of Volunteers
- Recommendations for design changes for this kind of IST

SAMPLES FROM THE FIELD

SAMPLE IST FINAL REPORT

This excerpt is from a final report of an IST developed by Peace Corps Romania. The schedule for this IST appears earlier in this section. As you can see from this format, the schedule doesn't have to be included in the final report itself, although a descriptive overview is essential to provide an accurate record of the major design features.

LANGUAGE IST 1996 --FINAL REPORT

To : CD
cc. : CD Secretary

From : LC

SUMMARY

The report contains :

- **a brief description of the event** including: time, site, goals, preparation, schedules, participation, curriculum, language staff, procedures, materials.
- **comments on major achievements** of the training
- **general recommendations**
- **attachments** : schedule, PCVs evaluation

• DESCRIPTION

Time and site: The Language IST took place Jan. 2-8 , 1996. starting on a Tuesday and ending on a Monday, so we had training over the weekend. The training site was selected according to location of the hotel and facilities offered. We wanted to be in a school that would offer Peace Corps some of the best accommodations that are to be found in similar institutions in Bucharest. The St. Sava High School offered us incredible support and good facilities : seven classrooms with individual desks , one of them accommodating the whole group, a special room for the teachers, a coffee area , the help of the Administrator, and three cleaning ladies. We had a lot of help from the Bucharest District of Education, who facilitated the approvals to use the school.

IST Preparation : The actual preparation started by mid October, two and a half months before the event, with looking at hotels in Bucharest and checking the availability of the possible teachers. A Needs Assessment was conducted at the beginning of November to determine PCVs' expectations and interest in the training . The results of this were the basis for the schedule and the content of the training .

IST Goals : The objectives of the training were determined after processing the Needs Assessments . The goal was to enhance PCVs effectiveness in their service by providing an opportunity to speak Romanian and to improve their language skills . The whole training was geared towards individual needs, including a large variety of

topics, language functions and classroom activities. The objectives were the following:
By the end of the training PCVs will be able to :

- Review Romanian language competencies
- Use vocabulary and functions beyond survival needs.
- Meet individual needs.
- Expand on and use work-related language.
- Design a plan for continuation of language learning back at one's site.
- Demonstrate appropriate behavior in various cross - cultural situations .
- Evaluate overall language knowledge.

Schedule : Although it was a challenge to design, the schedule turned out to be one of the most appreciated things by the PCVs. Altogether there were five days of training, starting at 9.00 and finishing at 3.30 p.m., (see attached schedules), aimed at creating a relaxed atmosphere so that PCV s enjoy coming to school and attending classes. Three 90-minute sessions were scheduled every day, two in the morning and one in the afternoon. All were "choice" sessions, for which PCVs had to sign up, selecting from five to seven options. The first sessions concentrated on review, the second sessions on LSP or the IST Manual and the afternoon sessions on cultural topics. Some sessions were repeated, so that PCVs had the chance to attend, even if they wanted two sessions that were scheduled at the same time. We had a total of 21 hours of language instruction.

Participation : All PCVs from Romania 5 took part in this training. Their presence and participation in training was far better than the pervious years, given also the fact that training was scheduled right after winter vacation. With very minor exceptions, all PCVs were present for all sessions.

Curriculum : The curriculum was topic and review oriented. We wanted PCVs to focus on how much they remember from PST and to work on improving areas of individual interest such as: job-related language, life in Romania, Romanian culture, or grammar. Each lesson, even the more structured grammar ones, were speaking oriented, having a conversational format.

The language staff: The teachers were selected from the teachers at the PST, based on their previous experience at ISTs and on their evaluation at PST. All teachers were interviewed, and seven out of the nine that applied were selected. Throughout the training and during preparation days teachers acted very professionally, were supportive of each other, and showed an excellent team spirit. They responded very positively to the "choice" IST idea, although it meant much more work for them than just teaching the IST Manual. Based on the input they had at the PST, they were happy to teach lessons on Romanian culture, such as Romanian history, music, media, and traditions. Also, they were eager to implement some of the lessons they had been working on as part of the LSP project. They prepared lesson plans and worksheets well in advance, over the Christmas period, so that everything was ready before we began. During training they were very supportive of the PCVs and, as they said, extremely well prepared for class. They are the main factor for the success of this IST.

Training procedures: Organizing groups in a "choice" training is difficult. We decided to have people sign up just for the first two days, and on the second day , for the rest of three days , to give them a chance to see how things are going, and ,eventually, to change their minds. Sessions started to repeat during the last two days, so people could choose more easily according to their interests and based on how the first two days went. The idea was to give as much freedom of choice as possible. The two questions one usually deals with in assigning groups are how to do balanced groups of only five to seven students and how to avoid a mixture of levels in a group.

We dealt with the first by repeating sessions that appeared more frequently in the Needs Assessment results, and by formatting the sign up sheet with only seven spots to one class. For the second question, we organized different level groups for all possible sessions, a slow and an faster paced one. The whole process was introduced by first signing up those had expressed specific preferences for one session or another. Worksheets were distributed at the end of each session. Language Proficiency Interviews were scheduled as an optional activity for the last training session. Ten PCVs chose to take the interview, which is approximately 27% of the group.

Materials : Besides the IST Manual, lesson plans and handouts, at this IST we used a lot more video and audio techniques than the years before. We had a video on watching TV news, a video on Romanian personalities, and a medical one on harassment. Audio tapes were used for Small Business and Social Work LSP lessons, and for Romanian music sessions. We also used magazines and newspapers and reference materials from Romanian literature.

• ACHIEVEMENTS

The IST was a very successful training, as it was the result of years of experience and a lot of preparation. The idea we focused on was to orient the training towards individual needs, taking into account that motivation for learning is increased if what one is learning is what one is interested in. We also stressed the idea that for many PCVs, it was important to be shown that they remembered much more from PST than they realized. Therefore, the major achievement is that: IST was geared towards individual needs; it provided not only an opportunity for practice, but also to learn new things. Another achievement is the amount of language material used in training that led to a very positive response on the part of the PCVs. For the first time we had integrated sessions with the TEFL APCD (one of the LSP sessions for TEFL), the PCMO (the session on harassment), and a variety of cross-cultural sessions. The atmosphere of the whole training was excellent and this was due to the work of the Program Assistant in ensuring good living conditions for the PCVs, the support received from the Admin unit in doing all payments in time (including teachers, for the first time!) and the help given by the personnel at the training site. Last but not least, the team of teachers made everything possible.

• GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

PCVs reaction to having the IST between 2-8 January was very different. They all appreciated the opportunity to get together, but TEFL PCVs complained that they had no time to prepare for school. The teachers also felt it was difficult to work before Christmas and before New Years and PC staff that helped not only worked for two consecutive weekends, but also during a holiday-Jan. 2nd. Looking for better times for the training should be kept open, since in 1997 training will again go over the weekend. St. Sava high school is an excellent training site. The director is very supportive of Peace Corps and the whole staff are very helpful. The school has many facilities, is very clean, and has an excellent location. Having choices definitely needs to be kept as the way to organize the training. The Needs Assessment could be shorter and more focused, to get a better return rate. For more effectiveness we could have the English translation of the cross-cultural presentation to be given as handouts.

OVERVIEW

PREPARING TRAINEES TO USE TUTORS AND INFORMANTS

This overview discusses issues to consider in preparing Trainees and Volunteers to work with tutors and language informants.

LANGUAGE LEARNING AFTER PST

It is essential for most Volunteers to use a trained language tutor or an informant in order to continue their language learning after Pre-Service Training. Recognizing this, most Peace Corps posts have a system for reimbursing PCVs for paying language tutors at their sites. There are three general situations that PCVs encounter in the field when they try to continue their language learning with a tutor. In a few areas, Volunteers can hire skilled, experienced language tutors. Alternatively, they may only be able to find teachers who have never taught their own language to foreigners, or they may be unable to find a teacher at all —just a willing but unskilled language informant.

WORKING WITH TRAINED LANGUAGE TUTORS

Trained language tutors may be experienced in teaching their language, familiar with a range of teaching techniques or be able to supply or recommend instructional materials for the Volunteer to use. Typically these tutors have a full-time job as a teacher or professor and supplement their regular salary by giving individual language lessons to foreigners living in the community. If the Language Coordinator knows that Trainees will be at sites where they will be able to hire a trained language tutor, she needs to ensure that by the end of PST, Trainees know how to:

- select a tutor, through referrals and interviews.
- assess their own learning needs, not just "follow the book".
- monitor and evaluate their own learning progress.
- give feedback and guidance to the tutor in an appropriate way so that instruction focuses on high-priority needs and teaching techniques fit individual learning styles.

WORKING WITH INEXPERIENCED TEACHERS

More typically, Volunteers do not have access to tutors with such a professional background. Often their language tutors are teachers in the elementary school or high school who have never taught their language before, and may have old-fashioned ideas about language teaching and learning. If this is likely to be the situation, the Language Coordinator needs to ensure that by the end of PST, Trainees know the four points listed above and these further areas as well:

- basic lesson planning
- familiarity with text books and other learning materials
- how the selected book should be used.
- a range of teaching/study methods
- strategies for introducing new methods to the tutor
- ways of compensating for the tutor's lack of knowledge about the language, perhaps the use of grammars and other reference books.

WORKING WITH HOST COUNTRY FRIENDS AS LANGUAGE INFORMANTS

In a number of posts, Volunteers use friends in the community as language informants. These people are not trained teachers and may not even expect payment for their help. In order to use an informant effectively, Trainees will need to take even further responsibility to direct their own learning. The Volunteers working with unskilled informants will need most of the skills involved in self-directed language learning. They need to plan, monitor, and evaluate their learning as PCVs do in other situations, but they also need to do all the lesson planning. In this situation, PCVs may not be able to use a text book (if there is one) at all, or they have to learn to use it creatively. They may need to learn to use a tape recorder to gather language material to study. It is important that posts provide Trainees in this situation with reference materials and help them learn how to use these materials independently. Language ISTs are particularly important for PCVs in these challenging situations.

CRITERIA FOR A GOOD TUTOR/ LANGUAGE INFORMANT

Volunteers at an IST in Suriname identified this list of important characteristics of a good tutor/language informant.

Knowledge: has English or other language learner knows; is a native speaker; knows other languages

Skills: can give relevant information; can be concise; has some teaching skills; knows when to correct and when not to

Attitudes: willing to follow PCV's directions; reliable (shows up as arranged); takes teaching seriously; mature, sober etc.

Practical Considerations: gender (same sex usually best); age:— old enough to know the language well, young enough to still have teeth; study solo or with other learner(s)?

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

COMMON CHALLENGES IN TUTORING SITUATIONS

These case studies were developed by Peace Corps Ethiopia about common "problem situations" experienced by Volunteers working with language tutors. You may want to use these as part of a PST or IST and have Volunteers brainstorm possible solutions. Alternatively, you may just want to study them and identify issues that you may need address as you organize training materials and activities.

BOB

Bob has just completed PST and he is excited about continuing his language study. He settles into his house, meets the teachers in his school, decides on a Tutor, and dives into language study- all before school officially opens. Once school begins, Bob finds himself steeped in lesson planning and auxiliary reading so he can do a good job in his new assignment. He spends a lot of time reading books given to him by Peace Corps to prepare grammar lessons (not his strong suit) for large multi level classes (no previous experience).

At the end of the day, he is exhausted from his school work, meeting and interacting with new people, and from trying to cope with a whole new life, which has engulfed him. He has missed several tutoring appointments, because school activities conflict with his more personal (a.k.a lower) priorities. The tutor is also busy and has to cancel appointments which Bobby has struggled to make time for. He is becoming frustrated by the sequence of events and his continuing inability to express himself in the local language.

PETER

Peter quickly identifies a tutor. After four lessons, he is frustrated by the tutor's style. Again and again he is drilled only in grammar and never gets to practice conversational skills. the tutor is the sister of his department head, and the department head is excited about his sister's new employment.

MARCIA

Marcia is eager to practice her new language, especially at school, but the teachers always laugh when she speaks. Those who don't laugh love to drill her with phrases she doesn't know or comment about her by using unfamiliar words. She is quickly becoming discouraged.

JAN

Jan gets to her site and is exhausted after the PST. The last thing she wants to do is study the language. After two months of using only English to get by, she decides to pick up her books and study. The books might as well have been in Ancient Greek. Instead of picking up where she had stopped in September, she has to re-learn the basics. When she starts to practice with her friends, they have no desire to help her, since they are used to speaking to her only in English.

CINDY

Cindy had completed PST with a moderately good command of the language and arrived at her site eager to find a tutor and continue her language acquisition. At her work site however, she found that all of her fellow faculty members only wanted to practice their English with her, including two who teach the national language. Even when she told the teachers that they would be paid for tutoring, they were not interested, nor were they cooperative about helping her to find someone in the community to tutor her. Her enthusiasm quickly began to wane.

SAMPLES FROM THE FIELD

USING A TUTOR: A PCV'S EXPERIENCE

The following are excerpts from a letter sent by a PCV to the Language Coordinator in Romania describing his experiences learning the language after he got to his site. You may want to share this information with volunteers as part of a PST or IST. Alternatively, you may just want to study it and identify common issues that you may need address as you organize your training materials and activities.

The frequency of tutoring is every day of the week, and sometimes on the weekends. We try to spend at least one hour, often they spend more than that, but we do not account for it and they know they are not going to be paid for the extra. The training itself occurs at the office but sometimes elsewhere. The ratio of language training is greatly varied. For example, sometimes it is just talking entirely in Romanian. At other times, the discussion is more complex regarding grammar or the relationship of words, etc. Then the discussion may be mostly in English. One example is a recent discussion I had about words that are "false friends". The object is to speak the language, but I find I cannot speak the language if I cannot see the language. What I mean is that I'm a visual animal and that is how I take in all information. I cannot build sentences if I cannot "see" them in my mind. So I translate articles with the guidance of one of my tutors, I write sentences and have the tutors correct them, and we talk. Resources used include newspapers articles, magazine articles, and trade publication (for job use). For reference we use several publications including a English-Romanian dictionary, Romanian dictionary, Romanian grammar book, and the lessons from the PST.

These are some of the ideas I shared with the new Trainees about using a tutor:

- The acquisition of a language is possible even for a slow language learner, provided they attempt to acquire the language on a consistent basis.
- To begin I recommend that a student has adequate reference materials.
- Another important tool is a tutor. I have used many tutors. It is important that the student keeps trying to find a tutor who suits them. Even if they have to try more people, it is OK.

Provided with a tutor and reference materials, these are some of the techniques I tried that worked :

1. Watch TV programs in English with Romanian subtitles. Try to read the subtitles out loud. If a tutor is present, have them correct pronunciation first. Also I ask what some words mean. During this exercise keep your reference

materials near to be able to use them. This exercise works on word recognition in reading and helps the process of memorization. Seeing is believing.

2. Listen consistently to a Romanian news program. Try to pick out a certain word group, for example, the date. After a while you will start to recognize that someone is saying a date, then what the date actually is. Eventually, you will start to notice variations. Always listen to weather, or the sports, and listen to familiar word patterns.

3. Have your tutor dictate to you. It may be poems, songs, the newspaper, whatever you choose. This exercise uses hearing recognition of contractions and commonly used expressions. Often I hear someone saying something and I think it is a word, while in reality it is several, like the dative pronoun contracted with the past tense of a verb. Afterwards I go over the dictation with the tutor, to see where I went wrong. This teaches how to listen, to recognize differences, and how to spell.

4. Memorize some Romanian songs -- the more popular with Romanians, the better. This exercise helps with pronunciation because when you do it wrong a Romanian will surely correct you. Again, you will learn some grammar and memorize some words in a meaningful context.

5. Read children's books out to a Romanian and have them correct your pronunciation.

Language acquisition is about staying in the language that you want to learn. It is too easy to stop using the language when the going gets difficult when you are constantly surrounded by good English speakers who allow you to leave their language. In order to stay in the language I have used the following strategies:

1. I make a deal with the Romanian speaker who wants to learn English that they speak English and I will speak in Romanian. We then correct each other as we go, thus becoming each other's tutor.

2. At work, I keep track of those who help me with the language and how much time they spend. At the end of the month, I have them sign the reimbursement form and pay them. Some will refuse to be paid, but afterwards many people at work will want to talk to me in Romanian.

In the end, I would stress the fact that language acquisition is about the amount of time you spend in the language, so be creative and try many ways to stay in the language.

HOW TO DO IT

PCV GUIDELINES FOR TUTORING

These guidelines were adapted from materials developed for Volunteers in the Czech Republic.

HOW TO PAY YOUR TUTOR

- You are responsible for finding a tutor, negotiating the price, and preparing a plan. The prices per lesson usually vary between ___ and ___ an hour. Peace Corps will reimburse you for the money spent on authorized tutoring. Payments are subject to prior approval by the Language Coordinator and the Admin. Officer.
- Send a plan and your tutoring receipts to the Language Coordinator, who will approve them and send them on to the APCD Admin.
- You can plan to spend no more than _____ a year on tutoring.
- If you want to buy language materials, you have to cover that out of the reading materials portion of your living allowance.

WHAT ACTIVITIES TO DO WITH YOUR TUTOR

Many people end up working with language informants or tutors who have not had much experience teaching their language to others. As a result, they sometimes have difficulty knowing how to best proceed with lessons. The following are some suggested general activities that you may want to consider using with your tutor.

1. WHERE TO START

- Go over your language materials from the PST, and make a list of things you still need to work on. (Write letters in the language to your teachers.)
- Find a tutor. Go over the PST language materials with her/him and work on exercises that you haven't done yet. Go over all the exercises you think you need to work on.
- Choose a textbook which you think will suit you the most. Go over the annotated list of textbooks and dictionaries that you were given during PST; look through the books in the Resource Center in the Peace Corps Office (there may be some available to check out).

2. WHAT YOU CAN STILL COVER

Learn how to say more about things you can already talk about:

- More about your background (what you did before you came here, what were your duties), your work here, and about your plans for future.
- Go over all the review exercises after some time and see how much more you can say; have your tutor correct it for you and compare it to the one from training.

3. LEARN TO TALK ABOUT NEW TOPICS

Ask for lessons on topics that you need or that interest you:

- your hobbies, tourism, architecture, books and films -- describe the plot; specialized topics such as computers, marketing, or grammar theory; other things that you hear around you
- **Learn:** relevant vocabulary, phrases and grammar
- **Review:** usage of cases, usage of aspect, usage of different phrases
- **Practice:** pronunciation, cases, aspect pairs, pronouns, and other things that must be memorized.

4. TRY TO FIGURE OUT YOUR LEARNING STYLE

- Go over the SILL again and see what new strategies you can try in order to improve your learning.
- Review your expectations and set new goals for your language learning.
- Read *Language Learning Strategies for Peace Corps Volunteers*.

SUGGESTIONS FOR WORKING WITH YOUR LANGUAGE TUTOR/HELPER

- First and foremost, exercise control over the work you do together. Regularly discuss your language learning goals and how you want your tutor to help you to achieve these goals.
- Don't be afraid to give your tutor regular feedback (e.g. if your tutor corrects you every time you make a mistake, and this is not what you prefer, let him or her know).
- Repeat as often as necessary the two points listed just above. Get your tutor to acquire these as habits, so that your work together can be most beneficial for you! If necessary, give your tutor examples of how you want your lessons conducted or of activities/exercises you find useful.
- Remember again that YOU are your best guide to what works for you. Don't do something because someone else says it works (for them). Experiment, by all means, but don't feel you must blindly continue doing something if you don't feel it's helping YOU.
- Don't feel that you must work with your tutor in a "formal" classroom-type setting. Go out for a walk, have a soda, or bring him or her to work.
- Be sure to review regularly things which you have been exposed to in the past. Every new lesson does not necessarily have to be a time for learning brand new material.
- Use your own notes/language journal to help organize the content (and even the form) of your language tutor sessions.
- Although formal study of grammar may be important to

TUTOR ROLES IN THE LANGUAGE LEARNING PROCESS

- A.**
 • **OBSERVE**
 • **PROCESS**
 • **VERIFY (WITH TUTOR)**
 • **USE**

- B.**
 • **LEARN (WITH TUTOR)**
 • **PROCESS**
 • **PRACTICE**
 • **USE**

- C.**
 • **OBSERVE**
 • **PROCESS**
 • **PRACTICE**
 • **CORRECT (WITH TUTOR)**
 • **USE**

OTHER SUGGESTIONS

you, don't let this constitute the entire content of your language study.

- Use the language in real communication!

Your tutor can play one (or more) of several important roles in the language learning process. Here are some suggestions: "A" and "B" contain very similar actions, but have slightly different activities depending upon the role you want the tutor to take and your preference for learning. Even "C" is possible (though not strongly recommended): The final stage for all of these is getting out and using the language.

1. Learner makes observations on his/her own.
2. Learner thinks about/analyzes what has been observed; notes hypotheses (go to tutor with specific questions about what you've seen or heard).
3. Learner verifies hypotheses with tutor; correct/amend as needed.
4. Learner goes into the community to practice the new language.

1. Learner works with a tutor to learn some new material.
2. Learner studies/reviews new material.
3. Learner practices the new material, alone/with the tutor.
4. Learner goes out to use the newly learned material.

1. Learner makes observations on his/her own.
2. Learner thinks about/analyzes what has been observed; notes hypotheses.
3. Learner goes out into community to practice using the new language (testing hypotheses based on data collected and analyzed), and, if someone demonstrates that there is lack of understanding.
4. Learner corrects mistake with the help of a tutor/helper.
5. Learner goes out and uses the newly mastered material.

- During the time between arriving at your post and choosing a formal tutor, take advantage of EVERYONE you meet: practice, practice, practice.
- Don't limit your use of the language to the times you are working with your language tutor; speak it whenever you can, even if this means greeting people or repeating to yourself phrases that you are trying to master.
- Be sure to take advantage of all kinds of available language input: listen to others as you ride in the bus, listen to the radio, buy and listen to music, watch TV, see movies, read the newspaper, read signs, look at billboards, read posters.
- Don't be unwilling to listen/read even though you may not understand everything. Listen or read for what you recognize; you'll be surprised how much you can "get" from what seems like incomprehensible material.

HOW TO DO IT

SAMPLE PRACTICE ACTIVITIES FOR INDEPENDENT LEARNING

Volunteers will probably need guidance in developing specific learning and practice activities and techniques that they can use with a language tutor or informant. A logical place to provide such information is during the latter part of the PST, with follow-up and re-enforcement during the first language IST. The activities described below were compiled from a variety of Peace Corps countries to provide some structure for PCVs to follow in their tutoring sessions.

CHART AND PICTURE ACTIVITIES

These activities all involve using a chart or picture instead of drills during a lesson with an informant or with a learning partner. Material in the chart and the language to be practiced should be based on material first introduced in a dialog. Creating the chart or picture with the informant could be quite a language learning experience by itself.

1. TOTAL PHYSICAL RESPONSE (TPR) WITH A MAP OF A VILLAGE.

After a dialog involving directions, the tutor demonstrates the directions on a map. Then the tutor and Volunteer both trace directions on maps together. Then the tutor gives commands and the PCV follows them. Finally, the PCV gives directions for the tutor to follow.

2. CALENDAR

Following a dialog that refers to seasons or months of the year, base a practice activity on a calendar that might include pictures on small pieces of paper (Post-Its?) that represent: seasons, weather, fruits and vegetables and other crops, people's activities etc. This could practice vocabulary and Q and A around ideas like "When do people (men? women?) harvest/plant various crops?" Or "What kind of fruit is available during season X?"

3. "FAMILY TREE" OF THE VILLAGE

After a dialog that helps introduce the PCV to various leaders in the community, there could be an activity with a "family tree" of the village, showing the organizational structures. This could be used as the basis for practicing different greetings, describing roles and responsibilities etc.

4. DAILY SCHEDULE GRIDS WITH INFORMATION ON MALE/FEMALE ACTIVITIES

With a discourse about what things women and men generally do during different times of the day, there could be an activity to practice questions and answers about gender roles and activities in a daily schedule. Fill out daily schedule grids with information on male and female activities during the day.

5. EVENTS/ EMOTIONS CHART

After a discourse on asking about others' feelings, the learner and informant could draw up a three- or four-column table with one column of events, occasions or activities matched to a column of feelings and emotions, and then a third column that indicates people's names (and possibly a fourth indicating date or time). These could be done with words or pictures wherever possible, and could be used to generate questions/answers like "Why was Carlo sad yesterday?" and answers like, "He received a letter saying his uncle died." This could also be used to form statements with *because*.

Who	Feeling/Seem	When	Why
Carlo's kids	upset	yesterday	dog died
Maria	excited	this morning	Pedro proposed
your spouse	unhappy	today	got bad news

OTHER USEFUL CHARTS/ PICTURES

Other useful charts/pictures could include: map of the garden, human body with different problems (broken arm etc.) matched with treatments, diagram of a house, animals and the means of hunting them or where they are found, store items with prices.

STEPS TO FOLLOW IN DOING A CHART PRACTICE ACTIVITY

1. Review the individual items in the chart with your language helper, becoming clear on meaning and sounds.
2. Have your language helper say aloud items in the chart in random order to see if you can locate them by pointing.
3. Language helper should model the language to be practiced with a few items, so that you are clear on the forms being used. Learner may take the "teacher" role by pointing to the chart items she wants to have modeled.
4. Language helper points to different items on the chart and you form the utterance.

NOTE: The specific steps may vary depending on the kind of language (question/answer, giving directions etc.) and kind of visual. The important idea is to move from comprehension to memorizing to forming utterances. Continue working with each step until ready for next.

VARIATION: INFORMATION GAP

Charts, tables, and maps can usually be turned into Information Gap practice activities. Information Gap is a pair practice activity in which each student has a map or table etc. that is identical with her partner's except that some information (names of certain locations on a map, times on a schedule) have been deleted from one and different information deleted from the other. The two learners need to question each other to fill in the missing information. For example, in the chart shown earlier (item 5), by erasing alternate boxes in the Why column, Learner A may need to ask for the reason why "Carlo's kids seemed upset yesterday," and

Learner B may need to ask why "Maria seemed excited this morning." The deletion of information has to be done carefully so that there is enough remaining information to ask natural questions. The question/answer practice should imitate a real-life exchange that practices the language forms being focused on. It may be a little tricky and time-consuming to invent good information gap activities, but it may be a welcome variation.

SAMPLES FROM THE FIELD

GUIDELINES FOR PCVS ABOUT SELECTING AND WORKING WITH A LANGUAGE TUTOR

These guidelines, developed by Peace Corps Czech Republic, include useful criteria that you may want to adapt for use in your own PSTs.

GUIDELINES FOR SELECTING AND WORKING WITH A LANGUAGE TUTOR

First And Foremost: Choose your own language tutor; DON'T let someone else choose your tutor for you. While you might ask others to *suggest* someone who "might be helpful" or who "would be good," YOU must choose a person with whom you can get along and with whom you can work comfortably.

Take time to decide on a tutor. Don't feel that you must choose your tutor immediately after arriving at your site. Although you do want to resume your language study as soon as possible, you should take time to get settled in, meet some people (potential language tutors!) and then choose a tutor.

Don't think your language tutor must be a trained language teacher. If you prefer working on grammar, then a professional teacher might be a good candidate, since he or she maybe able to explain grammar more effectively than a lay person; however, your language tutor can be anyone who speaks Czech, depending on your goals and your preferred style of learning.

Don't be afraid to choose someone who does not speak English as your language tutor. In fact, working with a non-English speaker can result in faster and better learning; you will be forced to get your message across in Czech; your tutor will quickly learn to adapt his/her speech to your level.

Other language helpers include: neighborhood children, shop clerks, your neighbors, sports teammates, co-workers, and students. All of these people can provide useful opportunities for practicing what you have learned and for learning new language. For example:

Neighborhood children: Children can be especially good if you want to interact at an uncomplicated level --easier Czech! If you want to work with someone who will be willing to answer hundreds of "What's this?" or "What are you doing?" questions without getting annoyed, or if you want someone who will not pick apart your grammar or correct your every mistake, then learning with a child is the way to go.

Neighbors: Your neighbors will quickly get to know who you are and they will understand that you are just learning Czech.

Shop clerks, sports teammates, office/school employees (e.g. door people, cleaning people, key people): Speaking regularly with these people can give you many opportunities to practice and get very comfortable with formulaic expressions (greetings, shopping) and simple small talk; you can practice "on the run" and won't feel obligated to stop for a long conversation. You can slowly, over time, introduce or become involved in longer conversations as your level of Czech increases.

HOW TO DO IT

SETTING UP SYSTEMS FOR MONITORING THE TUTORING PROCESS

Specific policies regarding tutor reporting and reimbursement vary from post to post. The system for doing this may have already been established by the Admin. Officer, and your role may not be extensive. But in other countries keeping track of the tutor activities and verifying appropriate reimbursement is part of the Language Coordinator's job description, and you may need to set up a system for Volunteers to use. At the very least, you will need to provide a clear description of policies and procedures for the Trainees during PST, so check that your post has developed clear policies about the following issues.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR TUTORING

Many posts have rules about being reimbursed for language tutors. In some countries these funds are available only during the first year of a PCV's service. In other countries, PCVs can take advantage of these funds up until their last three months of service. In many countries, having a clearly defined plan for on-going language learning is one of the conditions for being sworn in as a Volunteer. Make sure that you know and (where appropriate) have input on the policies that have been formulated for your post.

RATE OF PAY AND MAXIMUM NUMBER OF HOURS

Many countries set a maximum rate of pay that can be offered and an upper limit on the number of hours per week or month that can be compensated.

PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AND SUBMITTING REIMBURSE- MENT REQUESTS

In supervising the tutoring program you will need to be able to determine that the money is actually being spent for language study. Most posts have developed a reporting system for recording the number of hours and summarizing of the kinds of learning activities that are taking place in the tutoring sessions. The policies for how this reporting is done vary from country to country. In some places Volunteers must submit a study plan prior to approval of funds; in other countries, the report accompanies the request for reimbursement, and may be submitted on a weekly, monthly or quarterly basis. In

addition to record keeping, such reporting is also a useful source of information about what to cover in formal language ISTs. Work with your Admin. Officer to develop a system that achieves the goal of general oversight of the program without being too cumbersome or time-consuming to administer.

PROCEDURES FOR IDENTIFYING QUALIFIED TUTORS

Many posts, in addition to oversight, also try to keep track of qualified tutors, both to use for future "generations" of Volunteers and to serve as a potential source for PST and IST teaching staff. You will want to keep a record of basic contact information and qualifications of the individuals who are working as tutors.

GENERAL RECORD KEEPING

Many Language Coordinators find it very useful to keep a record for all PCVs taking advantage of the tutoring program including the following information:

- PCV's name
- Date reimbursement request was submitted
- Tutor's name
- Number of hours
- Cost/hour
- Total amount reimbursed to date
- Topics and grammar points

This kind of summary allows you to keep track of general trends and identify topics or areas to be covered during ISTs.

SAMPLES FROM THE FIELD

FORMS FOR TUTORING SUPERVISION

A number of forms have been developed to help Language Coordinators administer and monitor tutoring. The first is a tutoring worksheet developed in the Czech Republic to be submitted before tutoring begins. The Language Coordinator reviews and approves the worksheet before forwarding it to the Admin. officer.

Tutoring Worksheet

Volunteer's name: _____ Tutor's name: _____

Number of sessions to be taught: _____

Outline your plan briefly

Describe your lessons

Lesson No.

Topic of the Lesson

Don't think of this worksheet as an attempt to control the content of what you and your tutor work on. Its purpose is to help both you and your tutor to work more efficiently, and to help me determine the needs of other Volunteers for further language training.

This second form is to be submitted quarterly after the lessons take place accompanying requests for reimbursement.

QUARTERLY WORK PLAN

(to be filled in by the Tutor and PCV in English)

Names of PCV and Tutor :

Frequency of classes :

Duration of classes :

Payment :

Language of instruction : (if a combination of the 2, in what ratio)

Language skill emphasized (circle one or comment on the strategy) :

Speaking; Reading; Listening; Writing

Resources used :

Main steps of the plan :

Topic	Grammar	Nr. of hours
October		
November		
December		

Finally, we include a form developed by Peace Corps Poland to set up a data base of people who have been involved with tutoring.

**SURVEY
LANGUAGE TUTORING**

Please fill out this form and return it to the Training Coordinator at the PC office.

Name of PCV:
Town :

Group:
Program :

Information related to your Polish language tutor .
Name of the tutor :

Address :

Contact number :

Does tutor have any teaching background? YES NO
(If yes, please describe)

How many hours a month do you meet? _____

Are your classes taking place in a formal or informal setting?
(Please describe)

What materials are you working with?

Briefly describe a typical meeting, noting methods your tutor is using.

Your recommendation:

HOW TO DO IT

LANGUAGE NEWSLETTERS

USING THE VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER FOR ONGOING LANGUAGE LEARNING

Most countries have a Volunteer newsletter that is regularly distributed to Volunteers. This provides a worthwhile venue for additional language training. In a number of posts there is also a regular "language" newsletter which is distributed to PCVs. But even if there is only the Volunteer newsletter, it's useful to have a language page — or even pages, in countries with more than one language.

Language newsletters can print useful information about the language, additional practice activities, easy-to-understand articles and stories in the language, or even parallel versions of articles which appear in English.

How extensive your language newsletter is will, of course, depend on a number of issues:

- whether you are hired as a "full-time" language coordinator (and not just for a PST),
- what the local "tradition" is about the newsletter-- whether it's put out by the Peace Corps office or is totally "autonomous" and independent--produced entirely by the Volunteers without staff input,
- the resources available for production, and so forth.

A more extensive newsletter can include materials for Volunteers to use with their tutors and language informants. It can be the venue for distributing needs analyses for ISTs and Curriculum Development. The possibilities offered by a regular language newsletter are endless! And even a simple "language column" is a good way to provide Volunteers with ongoing input about the language.

TIPS FROM THE FIELD

Peace Corps Language Coordinators suggest keeping these tips in mind as you develop a language newsletter for your country:

- Keep it short.
- Use an attractive format, pictures, etc.
- Use a consistent pattern.
- Send it regularly but not so frequently that you overburden PCVs with paper.

- Use it for reviews, useful info on culture, culture events or Peace Corps events.
- Put in useful phrases, slang, etc. not included in PST. • Use it as a link between PST and IST.
- Use it as a resource for tutors. • Organize contests, such as translation contests with prizes.
- Include materials received from PCVs: translations, language learning strategies, cartoons or stories.
- Include jokes, quizzes, funny things.
- Ask PCVs for feedback on how to do it better and what to include in it.

SAMPLES FROM THE FIELD

SAMPLE LANGUAGE NEWSLETTER FROM ROMANIA

This excerpt is from a sample issue of *Numai Romanește* which was developed by the language program for Volunteers in Romania.

NUMAI ROMĂNEȘTE MOTTO "Din nou mă spun numai de cuvinte Nu e nicio muzică să izbucnesc din osul numărului" Nichita Stănescu

Numărul 26 - 19 Aprilie 1996

Bună! Cum este suprasaturat ultimul număr al săptămânii a trei ultime Trădătorilor ultimii
căpota se numără după numărul

Ce ținem de Zile
Pământului? Nu se
vedea că era
cuvinte agere de
ale

A numărul e în stare
nu se poate
cuvinte ține
adverbiale
cuvinte e nou
cuvinte
cuvinte e în
cuvinte e în
cuvinte e în
cuvinte e în
cuvinte e în
cuvinte e în



în stare

gurașă numărul numărul

Puțin spune, că este o mare de puțin

de puțin este o mare de puțin

e mare puținul de puținul pentru puțin, puținul

Unde puținul puținul? Așeză o puținul în puțin, sau o puținul de puțin. Pe puțin o puținul în puțin
sau o puținul

Exerciții

1. Puținul este puținul de puținul de puținul

Mă așeză un puținul de puținul de puținul

Găsește puținul de puținul

Mă așeză un puținul de puținul de puținul

Exerciții pentru puținul de puținul de puținul

Mă așeză un puținul de puținul de puținul

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Mă așeză un puținul de puținul de puținul

NUMAI ROMĂNEȘTE nr. 26 19 Aprilie 1996

- (Florile) _____ sunt de la _____ (fiori)
 4) Colegii nostri locuiesc într-un apartament
 (Colegii) _____ se simt bine în _____ (apartament)
 5) Profesorarele vorbesc romaneste
 (Profesoarele) _____ vorbesc despre _____ (tu)
 6) Mancarea este în frigider
 (Mancarea) _____ a fost gatita pentru _____ (copii)
 7) Pisica doarme pe canapea
 (Pisica) _____ doarme langa _____ (eu)
 8) Cadourile sunt sub pomul de Craciun
 (Cadourile) _____ sunt de la _____ (noi) pentru _____ (voi)
 9) O masina a trecut pe strada
 (Masina) _____ a trecut pe linga _____ (tu)
 10) Televizoarele color sunt scumpe
 (Televizoarele) _____ nu pot fi cumparate de _____ (parintii mei)
 1. Eu îl vad **pe** Don zilnic
 Eu nu _____ vad zilnic
 a. intalni
 Eu _____ am vazut ieri
 a. ajuta
 Eu _____ voi vedea maine
 2. Colegul meu intalneste **pe** Maria la teatru Colegul meu _____ intalneste la teatru
 El nu _____ intalneste la teatru
 a. vede El a intalnit _____ la teatru
 a. admira El _____ va intalni la teatru
 El nu _____ va intalni acolo
 3. Profesorul ajuta **pe** voi în problemele grele El _____ ajuta în problemele grele
 El _____ a ajutat
 El nu _____ a ajutat
 El _____ va ajuta
 El nu _____ va ajuta
 4. Toata lumea priveste **pe** mine cu mirare Toata lumea _____ priveste cu mirare
 Toata lumea _____ a privit cu mirare
 a. asculta Toata lumea _____ va privi cu mirare
 Nimeni nu _____ a privit cu mirare
 5. Vecinul nostru asculta **pe** giza cu interes Vecinul nostru _____ cu interes
 Vecinul a ascultat _____ cu interes
 a. citi Vecinul nu _____ asculta cu interes
 a. scrie repede Vecinul _____ va asculta cu interes
 6. Doctorul consulta **pacientii** zilnic Doctorul _____ consulta zilnic
 Doctorul nu _____ consulta zilnic
 a. astepta Doctorul _____ a consultat ieri
 Doctorul _____ va consulta maine
 Doctorul nu _____ va consulta maine
 7. Maria pune **florile** pe masa Maria _____ pune pe masa
 Maria _____ a pus pe masa deja

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a culege cateva flori Maria nu _____ a pus pe masa
 Maria _____ va pune pe masa
 Pune _____ pe masa imediat!

8. Directorul cunoaste **pe** noi foarte bine Directorul _____ cunoaste foarte bine
 Directorul nu _____ cunoaste foarte bine
 Directorul _____ a cunoscut ieri
 Directorul _____ va cunoaste peste cateva zile
 Prezinta _____ directorului

FUNCTIONAL ROMANIAN



Initiating Conversation	
Excuse me, but ..	Scuzati, dar...
I don't think we've met.	Nu cred ca ne fi intalnit mai inainte.
Don't I know you from somewhere?	Ve cunosc de undeva? Ne-am mai intalnit undeva?
Could I talk to you in a while...?	As putea sa vorbesc cu dumneavoastra peste un timp...?
I have some news.	Am (ceva) noutati. Vreau sa va spun ceva.
You won't believe this.	Nici n-ai sa crezi. (Nici nu vei crede.)

Răspunsuri la exercitiile din numărul trecut:

- la care, despre care, de la care, lângă care, de la care, în care, pe care, din care,
- voluntarii, bucurosi, dificil, profesoare, severe, inovelegătoare

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OVERVIEW

SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING: OVERVIEW AND SAMPLE ACTIVITIES

The groundwork for independent language learning needs to be set during PST. This overview discusses the issues involved in self-directed learning and suggests ways to integrate these issues into the language component of a PST.

LEARNER-CENTERED TRAINING AND SELF-DIRECTED LANGUAGE LEARNING

Most Peace Corps trainings are based on principles of adult learning. For example, nearly all trainers would agree that learners need to take responsibility for their own learning, but how much responsibility is the key question. Learner-centered training may be a matter of giving Trainees a few choices in the content of some sessions or it may use Open Space Technology, an approach in which each Trainee decides how to go about learning topics of his or her own choosing – a fully Trainee-directed approach. Similarly, language programs include a wide range of ways of supporting learner independence, sometimes within a single Pre-Service Training.

SIX KEY ELEMENTS OF INDEPENDENT LANGUAGE LEARNING

Any language program that aims to help learners gain even partial control over their own learning should incorporate materials and activities that address these six areas:

- **Attitude:** How Trainees feel about the language, their perception of their ability to learn it and their confidence in taking more responsibility for learning.
- **Knowledge about language and language learning:** What Trainees know and believe about what language is, about the particular language they are learning and how people learn a language
- **Self-knowledge:** What Trainees know about their own range of learning styles, modality preferences, and other personality factors that influence their learning.
- **Managing learning:** What Trainees understand about planning, monitoring and evaluating their learning and

INTEGRATING SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING INTO PST

learning processes.

- **Lesson planning:** Skills Trainees have for sequencing the steps in learning (attending, comprehending, remembering, practicing, using)
- **Knowledge of strategies:** Specific actions or mental steps that Trainees can use to manage their learning and to carry out a self-directed lesson (managing learning and lesson planning).

The extent to which self-directed learning is emphasized during Pre-Service Training is influenced by several factors, particularly the availability of skilled tutors in the field. If Volunteers can count on continuing their language learning with a skilled tutor, there is little reason to develop extensive skills in self-directed language learning. Each of the areas should still be addressed in PST, but an emphasis on "lesson planning," for example, is not necessary. Trainees in this situation still will benefit by knowing more about how they learn and learning how to manage their own learning. They will also benefit from learning how to assess their own needs and how to select strategies for memorizing or practicing the language on their own. Communication strategies are important for these Trainees also. But they do not need to spend time on using strategies to build their own coherent lesson plans.

In most Peace Corps language learning situations, though, a more thorough introduction to self-directed learning will be helpful. If there is not enough time, some of the training, (in lesson planning, for example), may be delayed until an IST. No matter what the training in self-directed learning during PST, a language IST will be an ideal time for Volunteers to reflect on their learning in the field and to review elements of SDL. This may be the time to work more on lesson planning, using an informant, monitoring strategy use, or tape recording.

PROCESSES/ ACTIVITIES TO PROMOTE SELF- DIRECTED LEARNING

1. PROVIDE EXPLICIT STRATEGIES TRAINING

This list of self-directed learning activities was suggested for Thailand's 1997 Trainees. This was a 12-week PST, using a community-based approach. Note the use of activities and materials found elsewhere in this Resource Kit.

From the beginning of training, teachers should introduce specific strategies for planning, focusing attention, monitoring, communicating (speaking and listening), memorizing, and practicing. This attention to strategies should be integrated into the "regular" language lessons. Be sure to include some of the most powerful strategies:

- focused listening or reading for a specific bit of information
- guessing meaning from context
- memory strategies

**2. ENCOURAGE USE
OF INDIVIDUAL
LEARNING LOGS**

From the beginning of training, Trainees should be keeping a learning log, using it as the basis for some question/answer activities every other day or so. Trainees should be writing about new words and expressions they hear, strategies they are using, etc. They should be writing about their community entry activities, culture skill learning activity, and community assignments from language lessons.

Be sure to allow time for writing in the learning logs and to compare ways of selecting and organizing contents of the logs. Teachers may be asked to keep similar logs about their experiences, reflecting on activities and teaching strategies they are using.

**3. CONDUCT
REGULAR SELF-
ASSESSMENTS**

From the beginning of training, Trainees should be performing regular self-assessment with a competency checklist. Guidelines and examples are provided in Section 7 (Assessment) of this Resource Kit.

**4. PROVIDE TRAINEE
CHOICES FOR
CONTENT OF
LESSONS**

Nearly all trainers would agree that learners need to take responsibility for their own learning, but how much responsibility is the key question. From Week 3 at the latest, incorporate Trainee suggestions or give Trainee choices for content of lessons. Different options are discussed later in this section, from giving Trainees a few choices in the content of some sessions to an approach in which each Trainee decides how to go about learning topics of his or her own choosing—a fully Trainee-directed approach.

**5. HAVE TRAINEES
CO-PLAN LESSONS
WITH A TEACHER**

Starting from week 5 of training, have individual Trainees co-plan some lessons (no more than an hour of instruction) with the teacher, so that Trainees learn the process of selecting content and sequencing activities. Each Trainee should have this co-planning experience two or three times.

**6. PROVIDE
READINGS AND
ACTIVITIES ABOUT
LANGUAGE,
LANGUAGE
LEARNING AND
LEARNING STYLES**

In the second half of the PST (Weeks 4-11) do readings (in English) and activities (about one per week) that help Trainees to understand more about language and language learning and to become more aware of their own learning styles. Here is a possible sequence:

- Analysis of learning style: use a learning styles inventory.
- Beliefs about the target language: contrast with English
- Beliefs about language learning: do a True/False Quiz linked to Chapter One of *Language Learning Strategies for PCVs*.
- Do the SILL to acquaint Trainees with a wide variety of learning strategies.
- Beliefs about language and communication: Have Trainees read and answer questions about Chapter 5, "The

Communication Process," in *How To Be A More Successful Language Learner*.

NOTE: Remember to help Trainees learn how to use resources such as dictionaries or reference grammars.

**7. PROVIDE A
SESSION ON CULTURE
SKILL LEARNING AND
SELF-DIRECTED
LEARNING
PRINCIPLES**

By week 8, have a session for Trainees to reflect explicitly on a culture skill that they have been learning in their host community (such as weaving or fishing) in order to understand the main elements of self-directed learning. Compare the process to language learning. Follow up with a focus on how to do a needs assessment.

**8. HAVE TRAINEES
PLAN LESSONS USING
A LANGUAGE
INFORMANT**

Toward the end of the PST, perhaps Week 10 or 11, provide some structured preparation for continued language-learning after PST. Have each Trainee plan a language lesson or two using a language informant (not a trained teacher) to practice and demonstrate the ability to use an un-trained tutor. The language lesson should be based on the Trainee's needs assessment of a tech project he or she is doing in the village.

**9. CONDUCT A
SESSION ABOUT
SELECTING AND
USING TUTORS**

Toward the end of PST, conduct a session about selecting and using tutors, and make sure that Trainees are familiar with the policies and guidelines for language tutors at your post.

HOW TO DO IT

A LEARNING PLAN FOR ANY TOPIC

This chapter was adapted from *Learning Kiribati On Your Own*, and appears as part of a new Peace Corps publication on self-directed learning which is included on the CD-Rom of this Resource Kit and is available from Peace Corps Washington. You may want to use it in connection with the self-directed learning training sessions that appear later in this section, or adapt the information for use in your own PST and TOT designs.

LEARNING PLAN STEPS IN A NUTSHELL

M O N I T O R	1. Decide what to learn A. Assess your needs B. Set goals
	2. Develop a lesson A. With an informant: create a dialog, learn a song, listen to a story, describe pictures, Q&A, etc. B. On the spot: • Focus attention: What should I pay attention to? • Comprehend: How can I make sense of this? • Remember: How will I remember it? Check for accuracy
	3. Practice A. With an informant: "classroom" activities B. On your own: eavesdropping, use kids as informants, make sentences, etc.
	4. Use It
	5. Evaluate A. Did I get it? B. Did my approach work?

PLANNING INDIVIDUAL LESSONS

This information will help you plan language lessons for yourself about almost any topic that interests you. The process is a series of steps in which you play the roles of curriculum developer, teacher, and learner. As the curriculum developer, you will decide on the topic and set a goal. As the teacher, you will need to select the language material that is the content of the lesson and set up practice activities for yourself, the learner.

- First, choose something you want to learn, such as how to apologize for not attending a wedding, refuse your neighbor's request to borrow your tape player, or announce plans for a training workshop.
- Next, prepare for the task by reviewing relevant vocabulary or thinking about similar situations that you are already comfortable with. To do this, use resource books, reflect on what you already know, and ask for help from your language helper. If possible, you eavesdrop on a native speaker or two and listen to what they say. Then, after some rehearsal, go out and do the task in the actual situation.
- Finally, evaluate about how much you've learned and what is still difficult for you, and begin thinking about your next lesson.

These steps are at the heart of learning a language on your own. Following them will allow you to learn the language you need at the time you want, when you feel ready to learn it. In addition, and perhaps more importantly, you stay in control of the learning and your own success—the key to maintaining motivation.

STEP ONE: DECIDE WHAT TO LEARN

- Start by thinking about an immediate need you have to communicate to get something you need or accomplish a task. Think of situations in which you don't feel comfortable or tend to avoid. Think of people you'd like to understand better or be able to communicate more effectively with.
- Notice that the need is usually not for a verb form or a noun case ending. Unless you are a linguist or have a very thorough understanding of grammar to begin with, it will be frustrating to base your lessons on the systems of the language. This is how field linguists develop an understanding of how a language works, but grammar is generally not a useful starting point if you want to learn how to communicate — especially if you have to be your own grammarian.
- So, after reflecting on your communication needs, write a learning objective. Be specific and break it down into manageable parts. For example, "participate in a meeting" is too general. You might divide it into "greet people appropriately, ask at least one question about the main topic, and compliment the food served at break." In fact, these could be objectives for three separate lessons.

STEP TWO: DEVELOP YOUR LESSON

- How are you supposed to write a lesson for something you don't know? Well, first of all, you already do know a lot about this situation because you've been in it at least once, you may have books to refer to, and you are surrounded by native speakers who can help. You will also be in situations frequently where you can eavesdrop on others and try to remember what they said. This is called learning "on the spot." The alternative is to get help from a language helper, someone who probably is not a trained language teacher, but understands your need for help with the language and has agreed to provide as much support as possible. Remember that no matter how good your lesson, what people say to you when you try it out will be a little different.

1. DEVELOPING A LESSON WITH A LANGUAGE HELPER

Your language helper will help you figure out what you should say and what you might anticipate hearing in reply. You can write down possibilities as a dialogue, a conversation or a series of questions you plan to ask, and the answers you anticipate hearing. This will form the language sample that you will practice with.

- In order to get a good language sample, it's important that your helper really understand the situation that you are working on. Discuss the setting, who is there, and what people are doing. If you simply ask for a translation of sentences, you may receive accurate language, but not the language that native speakers really use. Ask your helper, "How would *you* say it in this situation?" with the emphasis on "you." This is usually more effective than asking if what you have written is correct, because your language helper might agree just to be polite.

- It is important to consider how polite or formal your language needs to be in the situation. Part of this is selecting the appropriate words and actions for opening and closing your conversation, for making a request, responding to an offer and so on. It also involves an understanding of your perceived status, how the people around you see you. Are you seen as a peer or as someone of high status? Are foreigners usually expected to speak more formally than others?

- You should usually think about including social "chit-chat" in a lesson that is focused on a "business" task. For example, if you need to buy a can of beef stew, don't stop with the language for asking if the storekeeper has your favorite brand. In addition to this business language, add some conversation with the shopkeeper about his family, about the weather, or about the expected arrival of a new supply of beef stew.

- After you have developed a lesson, check it carefully with your helper to be sure that what you have written is accurate and natural sounding.

2. DEVELOPING A LESSON "ON THE SPOT"

You can also develop a language lesson on the spot, in the actual situation where you want to improve your language skills.

- The first step in this approach is to listen in a very focused way. This means that you should not be trying to learn the language in a situation in which you are required to participate too much. A Volunteer in Tonga said that she was able to learn a lot of the language she needed for community meetings by visiting another Volunteer and sitting in on her meetings: "Then I'm just the guest, and no one is asking me for opinions or expecting me to join in the discussion." To learn how to teach something to others, it would be a good idea to ask people in your community to teach you something first. As you learn how to prepare a local dish, do a dance, or carve a paddle, you can be listening to the way your mentor gives instructions, corrects you, or praises your skill.

- Once you have selected a setting in which you can listen without pressure to participate, you need to eavesdrop or listen for only a few specific elements. If your objective is to learn how to introduce a new topic at a meeting, you need to ignore a lot of the rest of what you hear, and just listen for the cues that indicate a new topic is coming up. (You will probably have to learn how someone concludes a topic at the same time so that you can spot the transition.) To know when and where to focus your attention you will need to listen for key words, look for changes in people's expressions or other body language, and refer to any other helpful cues, such as a written agenda for a meeting. The same strategies will help you figure out the meaning of what you are hearing. It's important that you understand at least the gist of what you are focusing on or you will have an extremely difficult time remembering any of it.

- To develop your "on the spot" language lesson, you need to think of ways that you will remember what you are listening to. Can you use a tape recorder? Is it a situation in which you could write things down? (You could pretend to be writing a letter home while eavesdropping at a lunch counter, for example). You may need to use mental strategies, like repeating words and phrases over and over in your mind until you have a chance to write them down later.

- Write down the language you want to learn in the form of a dialogue or conversation, so that it is in a social and culturally appropriate context. Then, it is important that you check your lesson material with a native speaker to be sure it is natural sounding and accurate.

- Think about specific strategies for developing a lesson that will suit your learning needs. And while you are using these strategies, monitor how well each is working for you. Keep notes in your language notebook, talk to friends about them, or

at least think about them at the end of the day. If you don't pay attention to these strategies, you may continue to use ones that aren't working very well and fail to try new ones that could help.

STEP THREE: PRACTICE

Your main goal during the practice step is to memorize new expressions and to learn how to say them smoothly, without stumbling over the difficult sounds. You'll also want to get a better feel for what the sounds mean at the moment you are hearing them—to have the meaning come automatically. The basic practice technique for becoming fluent in making the sounds is repetition. Repeat your dialogue or conversation out loud, or play games that require repeating the new phrases and vocabulary over and over again until you produce something that sounds like the new language. Don't expect perfection during one practice session.

- Two important elements in making the meaning clear are the rhythm and melody of the language—the places where the voice goes up or down, becomes louder or softer, or where there are pauses. The tone of voice is important, too. One way to begin to learn these in a new language is to listen carefully in the setting for the actual words and phrases you want to learn—and perhaps even say what you hear to yourself. Another is to ask your language helper to read your lesson. Listen to the way she uses her voice to convey the meaning and imitate her. Also watch the way she uses her body (gestures, facial expressions, etc.) to get the meaning across.
- Don't try repeating things you don't understand. While you're practicing saying the sounds, work on learning their meanings, too. Make pictures in your mind and associate them with the new meanings or sounds of the new words. Or think of words in English or other language that they remind you of.

To practice you should certainly try listening in the setting (on the spot) or listening to your friend and imitating her. In addition you can do some study activities on your own, practice with kids in the neighborhood, or do some of the activities below with your language helper or a friend.

- Connect physical movement and actions with the language you are practicing by following and giving commands.
- Play games with a chart, map or pictures to practice vocabulary.
- Ask your friend to tape record your lesson so you can practice repeating it later.
- Play language learning games for building your vocabulary within the topic area of your lesson.
- Do activities you recall from Pre-Service Training.

- After other practice activities, role-play your lesson with your language helper. This might be a good time, if you haven't already done so, to put your lesson into a complete, culturally acceptable exchange (an appropriate greeting at the beginning, appropriate behavior throughout, a leave-taking at the end—and appropriate gestures).

- The last step before going out and doing it is to remind yourself of the phrases that will allow you to control the conversation when you have trouble understanding what's going on or when you want to end the conversation politely. Remember—you don't have to use everything in your original plan or everything your helper may suggest. You decide for yourself what is a manageable amount of new language to use each time you go out on your learning adventures. This is important for maintaining your self-confidence and motivation.

STEP FOUR: USE IT

Now step outside, and put yourself into a situation where you can use your lesson. Plan a time of day when people will be willing to stop and talk, or that is appropriate to the topic of your lesson.

- *Try it out more than once*, with different people. Keep doing it until you feel comfortable and confident. The more times you put yourself into the same or similar situation, the more quickly this part of the language and culture will become a part of you.

- *Take notes* as you go along, if the setting and situation permit, about what the people said and what you think they said; also, make note of things they did that puzzled or surprised you.

STEP FIVE: EVALUATE

It's helpful to continually assess the way you are learning as well as what you are learning. Sit quietly and think about the experience. Look over your notes and write a bit more about what happened: who you talked to, what was said and done, and how you felt doing it. Think about *what* you learned and about *how* you learned it. What worked, what didn't? Reread the other chapters to help you gain more insights into what helps you to learn. Think about how you might improve the way you are working with your language helper, and talk it over with her. Here are some specific things to write about or to do:

- Make a list of new words and phrases. Write down the ones you think you are now able to say and use more smoothly and naturally. Make another list of the ones you wish you had known or been able to use more smoothly. Do the same for pronunciation difficulties. Write down any new phrases you heard that were variations on what you had planned.

- Make a list of things that surprised, puzzled, or upset you, or in general, made you feel "different." Most likely, these

involve cross-cultural misunderstandings. Describe what the other people did, what you did, how you felt, and how you would expect someone from your culture to behave in a similar situation. Then reflect on what you think the underlying value in your culture is that makes you expect this kind of behavior (and not expect it in your new culture).

- Get together with your language helper. Show her your notes and ask your questions. Discuss the reactions of the people to you—talk about what happened that made you feel "different." Get her perspective on what happened and compare it with yours. Work at better understanding why the people behaved the way they did and what it means in the culture. Talk about what you would like to do or say differently the next time you're in a similar situation, and get your friend's advice. You might do a revised role-play or some language learning games, or ask her to record a new or revised dialogue using what you learned.

POSSIBLE TOPICS FOR SELF- DIRECTED LEARNING LESSONS

Now you're ready to plan another lesson. It could be a follow-up to this one with revisions based on what you learned. Do it a few more times until it comes easy to you, and feels natural. Or, it could be on an entirely different topic. Perhaps a new topic emerged during this one. Or you may want to revisit a topic you covered earlier—even one from PST—with a fresh perspective (and wider vocabulary) to do a more thorough job. By "spiraling" your topics, you can go deeper into the language and culture and use more natural phrases as your language ability increases.

Peace Corps Philippines includes this list of possible topics that work well with this style of self-directed language lessons.

For the beginning learner:

- Finding a place to live
- Using public transportation
- Developing a route of listeners
- Greetings; leave-taking; appreciation
- Your role as a learner
- Personal questions
- Polite phrases
- Responding to a welcome
- Classification; affirmation; denial
- Exploring objects
- Descriptions
- Shopping
- Restaurant
- Arithmetic
- Question about people; introductions
- Exploring space and time; directions
- Exploring space and time; transportation

- Exploring activities
- Exploring activities in space and time
- Exploring circumstances of activities
- Descriptions and expansions
- Telephones

For further exploration:

- Get and give instructions
- Requests
- Comprehension instructions
- Vocabulary building: objects animals and people
- Events and activities
- Descriptions and qualities
- Small talk
- Appointments
- Giving directions
- Personal interchanges
- Your host country
- Advice
- Sharing interesting experiences
- Telling stories about others
- Telling about your plans and goals
- Your neighborhood
- Talking about a picture
- Expressing your emotions

HOW TO DO IT

USING A LANGUAGE LEARNING NOTEBOOK

Language learning notebooks are one very useful tool in planning and monitoring self-directed language learning. Notebooks can be used to help learners reflect on their own strategies and learning styles, establish specific personal language learning goals, and assess their own progress. This information on using language learning notebooks is adapted from *Learning Kiribati On Your Own*, and appears in the new publication on self-directed language learning included on the CD-Rom of this Resource Kit, and available from Peace Corps Washington.

WHY USE NOTEBOOKS?

When learning a language, some people just jump in and learn the language by using it everyday. Most people, however, find that spending some amount of time reflecting on their experience and writing about it, no matter how short, makes their learning easier and more effective. Even writing a free-form narrative description of your learning experiences on a regular basis will help. Here are a few ideas about what to write in your language learning notebooks and how to organize your thoughts.

WHAT SHOULD THEY CONTAIN?

No matter what format you choose to use, there are three main topics to include in your ruminations and writings:

- **Language** : words, expressions, pronunciation, and grammar that you learned, nearly learned, or discovered you'd like to learn.
- **Culture** : non-verbal ways of communicating, norms of behavior, attitudes and values that you've become aware of, understand better, or would like to learn more about.
- **Learning** : things that helped your learning and things that hindered, like the techniques and activities you used, how you felt doing it, and the role your language helper and others played.

For each of these topics, there are two main questions to address:

- What did you learn?
- What questions are you left with?

HOW CAN LANGUAGE NOTEBOOKS BE USED?

Each time you write in your language learning notebook, start by reading some of your more recent entries. Or write first, and then read. Look for patterns of both progress (for your motivation) and difficulties (for planning future lessons).

- Think before you write. Think, write. Ruminates, reflect, write. Then discuss with the people who care the most about your learning their language.

- How you keep the language notebook or what format you choose really depends on your own learning style and your changing learning needs. There are three common formats for language learning logs determined by how structured your entry format is:

1. INFORMAL FORMAT

The most informal type of notebook allows for the maximum amount of freedom in recording your language learning experiences and what you are learning from them. Simply get a notebook and write in it on a regular basis. Suggestions for topics and questions are listed above.

2. SEMI-FORMAL FORMAT

You can also write regularly in this more formal type of notebook, but you follow a list of more specific suggestions and questions to organize it.

What To Include:

- Your goals and objectives for learning the language
- Your self study lessons
- New words or expressions you have learned or want to learn
- Words you have heard or read that you want to ask someone about or look up in a dictionary
- Grammar rules you have learned
- Notes about conversations you have in the language
- Summaries of what you read in the language
- A record of the errors you want to work on
- Comments on learning strategies you have used successfully or unsuccessfully
- A record of the amount of time you spend learning the language

3. FORMAL FORMAT

Use this format if you like to have everything on one page, in neat little boxes. You can draw the grid by hand on blank pieces of paper, then fasten them together with a stapler or tape, to make your own notebook. Or, perhaps you can find a Xerox machine someplace with a friendly custodian who will let you make copies.

The sample shown here is smaller than the actual one. Place your grid horizontally on a piece of 8 1/2" X 11" paper and fill in these heading (or others that work better for you.)

DATE _____		PAGE NO. _____
ACCOMPLISHMENTS		NOT SURE YET
VOCABULARY	WORDS, SENT, EXPRESSIONS	CONTEXT
SENTENCES/SENTENCE PATTERNS	I NEEDED TO SAY...	
CULTURAL AWARENESS AND RELATED LANGUAGE	COMMENTS ABOUT LEARNING TECHNIQUES THAT SEEM TO HAVE BEEN EFFECTIVE	
HOW I FELT/MY EMOTIONAL STATE	QUESTIONS I'M LEFT WITH	

USING YOUR NOTEBOOK WITH A LANGUAGE LEARNING HELPER

• After each self study lesson, reflect on your plan for language learning in your notebook, including:

- a) the language objectives you tried to achieve,
- b) the problems you had learning,
- c) the successes you had learning.

Then show the entries to your language helper and discuss them with her; talk about what you did and decide what you might do differently next time.

• Reflect on your use of learning strategies, including:

- a) the language and behavior you noticed or paid attention to,
- b) the learning strategies or techniques you used for comprehending, for getting the meaning,
- c) the strategies you used to practice the language) the strategies you used for analyzing and learning from the experience,
- d) your assessment of what worked and what didn't.

Then show the above entries to your language helper and discuss them with her; talk about what you did and what you would do differently the next time.

HOW TO DO IT

USING FRIENDS IN THE COMMUNITY FOR SELF- DIRECTED LEARNING

Trainees who are used to the idea that language learning is something that takes place in a formal classroom context may need guidance about how to apply the principles of non-formal education to the area of language learning. The community contains hundreds of potential teachers—none of whom would usually be considered as “teachers” or even “tutors”. But they are nonetheless an excellent source of expertise for on-going language learning. This information on using language informants from the community is adapted from *Learning Kiribati On Your Own*, and appears as part of a new Peace Corps publication on self-directed learning which is included on the CD-Rom of this Resource Kit and is available from Peace Corps Washington. You may want to use it in connection with the self-directed learning training sessions that appear later in this section, or adapt the information for use in your own PST and TOT designs.

FINDING A LANGUAGE HELPER

In order to learn a new language on your own (that is, without formal instruction) you need someone you can turn to when you have a question, someone who can explain what to say and how to say it so you minimize your chances of offending and maximize your chances of communicating appropriately, someone who cares about you and wants to see you succeed, and someone you like and trust. You need a language helper, preferably one who speaks some English, who will help you prepare for your learning adventures and help you understand what you learned from them when you come back.

Throughout this discussion about language helpers, we refer to the helper as “she” to avoid the awkward use of he/she. Note that it is probably wise to choose a language helper who is the same sex as you are, for cultural and social reasons.

So, find a helper, learn the language, and enjoy your life in your new country. Here are a few ideas of things to do with your helper, arranged in two groups: formal and informal.

FORMAL LEARNING

The suggestions in this section are for times when you and your helper are working together on your self-study lessons or other times when you are formally engaged in language learning activities.

- In general, the best way your helper can assist you is to guide you through the self-study lessons. She can help you choose and practice the right words to accomplish your task in a culturally acceptable way and help you gain the confidence you'll need to go out and do it. Then she can help you interpret the experience and learn from it. If you are looking for specific activities to do with your language helper, the learning plan includes suggestions.
- It's better for maintaining your motivation if you concentrate on learning things that are of real importance to you. If you don't, you'll probably quickly lose interest and want to quit. Therefore, for the most part, don't ask or expect your helper to plan the lessons for you unless you've agreed in advance on the topic and what you're going to do with it. Remember, you are both the learner and the teacher.
- When you ask your helper to tell you how to say something in your new language, you want the answer to be what people usually say in real life, not a simplified or overly formal form that she may think would be better for you to learn. One way to do this is to ask her how she would say it in this situation. This works better than asking if what you have written or said is right, because she might say "yes" to be polite.
- Pick a topic and talk about it for five or ten minutes with your helper. Tape record the conversation, transcribe it later, and then ask your language helper to look at what you've written. At another time, listen to the tape again and see what you can hear that you couldn't hear before. This is an excellent exercise for improving your ability to hear individual sounds and words, and learn colloquial and idiomatic speech. Or, instead of having a conversation, ask your language helper to tell you a story. Listen carefully for the format for telling stories and the standard expressions that are always used, like, "Once upon a time...."
- Listen to tapes together that you've made of radio broadcasts or of people talking. Ask her to help you figure out what's going on, and have her listen to you imitate them.

INFORMAL LEARNING

- Ask your language helper questions about the language and culture on a regular, ongoing basis—anytime you're together. It's good to clarify doubts and get questions answered as soon as possible to avoid slowing down your progress and dampening your enthusiasm.
- Try having a conversation in which you speak English and your language helper speaks her language. This is a good exercise for practicing listening comprehension without the added stress of having to produce the new language. The

conversation will flow more smoothly and you will understand what you're talking about more easily than if you were only speaking the new language.

- Ask your language helper to correct your mistakes, but help her learn ways to do it that will truly be helpful. For example, some people prefer to be corrected in private when they are alone with their language helper but not in public, where they might be embarrassed by the corrections. Another idea is to ask your language helper to point out your mistakes, but to give you a chance to correct them yourself before she tells you how to say it. But no matter how you and your language helper work with your mistakes, remember that mistakes are a natural part of the learning process. They tell you what you know and where you need to do more work.
- Ask your language helper to accompany you on your "learning adventures" to observe you, but to let you do all of the talking, or to "coach" you, when you need help.
- There are many other things you can do with your language helper, of course, that have to do with practicing specific parts of the language, but you can also just talk about whatever comes up, with no particular language purpose in mind.

HOW TO DO IT

SELF-ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUES

This information on different techniques for self-assessment is adapted from *Learning Kiribati On Your Own*, and appears as part of a new Peace Corps publication on self-directed learning which is included on the CD-Rom of this Resource Kit and is available from Peace Corps Washington. You may want to use it in connection with the self-directed learning training sessions that appear later in this section, or adapt the information for use in your own PST and TOT designs.

SELF- ASSESSMENT AND LANGUAGE LEARNING

Section 7 of this Resource Kit discusses the Assessment of Trainees. But an equally important part of independent and self-directed language learning is "self-assessment". During PST Trainee's should be introduced to some of the basic concepts and techniques they can use to monitor and evaluate their own progress.

TYPES OF SELF- ASSESSMENT

Two types of assessment Trainees should know about:

- **Ongoing monitoring** of how the person or people you are talking to are understanding what you are saying, constantly, throughout the conversation
- **"Final" assessment** at the end of a self-study lesson, for example, or at the end of the week or month, when you ask yourself, "Did I achieve my goal or objective?"

PURPOSES OF SELF- ASSESSMENT

Assessing progress on a regular basis can help learners to:

- Sustain your motivation—often you might feel you are not making any progress at all, but you really are, as the PCV above notes.
- Find things you need to work on which can be topics for your self-study lessons.
- Know how your techniques for learning are working and where you might be able to do better.
- Reinforce things you are saying correctly.

CRITERIA FOR SELF- ASSESSMENT

The most sensible criteria for evaluating your progress are the goal and objectives you have set for yourself. From the beginning, as you plan each of your self-study lessons, devise ways to assess whether you have learned what you set out to learn. You set the objective, and at the same time devise a way of knowing when you have reached it. Ask yourself two questions:

- "Where am I going?" and
- "How am I doing at getting there?"

Don't compare your progress to that of others. There will always be someone who speaks better than you do. Instead, measure yourself against yourself. Compare what you could do last month with what you can do now, then use that information to know where to direct your language learning efforts in the weeks ahead.

In addition to your own criteria for assessing your progress, you can use the ACTFL (American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages) checklist as a general guide. It is also another source for ideas of what to learn next. Use the LPI rating you get at the end of the PST as your benchmark for keeping track of your progress. A modified version of the ACTFL scale, called "The Language Learner's Proficiency Scale" can be found later in this section.

TECHNIQUES OF SELF- ASSESSMENT

Here are techniques that successful language learners use to assess their learning. Choose ones that you think will work for you:

1. ORGANIZE

- **Set weekly goals.** In addition to your long-term goal and the specific short-term learning objectives you set for each of your learning plans (for example, asking the cost of postage, greeting the postal clerk), set a weekly goal which relates to your main long-term goal (for example, to be able to carry on a social conversation with clerks in stores and the post office). If you use one of the planning grids (see Setting Goals and Objectives) to identify your learning needs, turn these needs into goals that you want to meet.

- **Set long-term goals.** Compare where you are now on the Language Learners' Proficiency Scale with where you were the last time you assessed yourself. Then set new goals for the next month or two.

2. WRITE IT DOWN

- **Keep a journal.** In "A Learning Plan for Any Topic," one suggestion is to record the language that you hear and use as well as questions you have as you explore different language and cultural situations. Summarize your learning in the journal on a periodic basis. This also becomes a nice record of your time in country and your experiences with the people you work and live with.

- **Review your progress periodically**—at least once a month. Write in your journal or notebook about the new things you can do and say that you couldn't do a month ago. Read through your notes and word lists. Ask your best friends what they are aware of that you can do better now.

- **Write letters home to friends and family.** In these letters, add a paragraph or two about your language learning: what your goals are and how you are meeting them. Keep copies of these letters (a piece of carbon paper works just as well as a photocopy machine) both as a record of what you are doing in general and your language learning in particular. And someday when you become a famous author, you can pull out excerpts from these letters for publication!

ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

- **Share strategies with others** who are also struggling with the language. When you get together with other Volunteers at a Peace Corps conference take a few minutes to talk about *how* you are learning as well as *what* you are learning.

- **Write letters or post cards in your new language** to your PST host family, copying patterns they use in their letters to you. You might ask your language helper to assist you.

- **Assess your knowledge of grammar** by doing exercises in any grammar book you have and by having your language helper check them for you. Remember, however, that this will help you assess what you know *about* the language, not how well you can actually *use* it in conversation.

- **Pay attention to body language.** A good way to assess how you are doing at the very moment you are talking to someone is to pay attention to their body language. How are they holding their bodies, and what facial expressions are they making? Do they look confused, bored, struggling to understand? Do they seem to want to get away?

- **Know your preferred learning styles.** If you aren't getting the results you want, take a look at the "Language Learning Styles" chapter of this book. Which are your preferred learning styles? Would trying other kinds of learning strategies be helpful?

HOW TO DO IT

ACTFL SELF-ASSESSMENT GUIDE

The following proficiency rating scale was adapted from the original ACTFL Proficiency Scale by Terry Marshall, a former Peace Corps Country Director in the Solomon Islands. He divided the scale into two components: a narrative description, which summarizes skill levels, and a self-rating checklist, which suggests performance objectives for each skill level. The scales are based on one's overall ability to communicate effectively. This includes the ability to speak and understand, the proper use of grammar and pronunciation, and the ability to understand the cultural context of a language.

THE LANGUAGE LEARNER'S PROFICIENCY SCALE

(From *The Whole World Guide to Language Learning*, by Terry Marshall.)

The "Narrative Description" summarizes your skills. The "Self-Rating Checklist" represents clusters of language tasks. For example, "say hello and good-bye" represents the general ability to greet and take leave in a variety of situations. You can use this scale both to help you determine your learning objectives and to assess your progress in achieving them.

LEVEL	NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION	SELF-RATING CHECKLIST
NOVICE —LOW	• Able to respond to or speak a few isolated words—those borrowed from English or commonly used. • Has identified him or herself as a language learner.	• I can say "hello" and "good-bye." • I can count to ten. • I can use courtesy words such as "thank you" and "excuse me." • I know a handful of words. • I am eager to begin learning my target language. • I have set some goals for my language learning.
NOVICE —MID	• Can express very simple needs in polite language. Uses mostly memorized words and phrases. Can say short phrases if given time to think about what he or she wants to say. • Speaks in a heavy accent with many errors and confuses sounds that are similar.	• I can respond to simple commands such as "stand up" and "come here." • I can greet people and take my leave correctly. • I can ask basic questions, using who, what, when and where. • I can make simple statements and commands such as "it's hot" and "turn on the light."

NOVICE —MID (CONTINUED)	• Speech is difficult to understand, even to teachers used to working with language students.	• I can thank people and make simple requests. • I can use at least fifty words in appropriate contexts. • I can sing one verse of a folk song or popular sing-along tune. • I can perform at least one task at the novice-high level.
NOVICE —HIGH	• Can ask questions and make simple statements based on memorized sentences. Understands conversation fragments and simple commands. Can deal with simple topics of daily need. Speaks mostly in short, direct sentences, but can say some longer phrases and sentences if given time to think about them first. • Still makes frequent errors in pronunciation and word use. Frequently asks speaker to slow down or repeat. Communicates with coworkers but has difficulty with others. • Behaves considerably in dealing with host country nationals. Understands some nonverbal cues.	• I understand and can make simple statements about family, age, address, weather, time and daily activities. • I understand some words when the context helps explain them, e.g., in the marketplace. • My vocabulary includes names of basic concepts: days, months, numbers 1 to 100, articles of clothing, body parts, family relationships. • I can use at least one hundred nouns and verbs in appropriate contexts. • I am beginning to know what's expected of me in simple social situations. • I can perform at least two tasks at the intermediate-low level.
INTER- MEDIATE— LOW	• Can speak on familiar topics, ask and answer simple questions, initiate and respond to simple statements, and carry on face-to-face discussions. Can pick out the main idea in a friendly informal conversation. • Often speaks incorrectly but by repeating, generally can be understood by native speakers who regularly deal with foreigners. • Frequently can understand native speaker if he or she repeats or speaks more slowly.	• I can initiate and close conversations appropriately. • I can introduce myself or someone else. • I can buy a ticket, catch a bus or boat, and get off at the right place. • I can respond to simple directions from customs officials, policemen or other officials. • I can discuss simple topics with friends.
INTER- MEDIATE— MID	• Can participate in simple conversations about some survival needs and social traditions. Can discuss topics beyond basic survival, such as personal history and leisure time activities.	• I can handle questions about my marital status, nationality, occupation, age and place of birth. • I can order a simple meal from a restaurant menu. • I can ask for or tell the time, date, and day of the week. • I can handle simple business at the post office, a bank, and the pharmacy.
INTER- MEDIATE— MID (CONTINUED)	• Beginning to use correct basic grammar constructions such as subject-verb and noun-adjective agreement.	• I'm beginning to speak more correctly; my subjects and verbs generally agree. • I can perform at least one task at the intermediate-high level.

INTER-MEDIATE —HIGH	• Can participate in short conversations about most survival needs, limited social conventions, and other topics. Gets the gist of conversations on familiar topics, though finds it hard to tune in on long conversations or in unfamiliar situations. • Speaks mostly in short, discrete sentences, but shows occasional bursts of spontaneity. Can use most question forms, basic tenses, pronouns, and verb inflections, though still speaks with many errors. • Can be understood by native speakers used to speaking with foreigners. By repeating things, can frequently be understood by the general public. • In dealing with host country citizens, can get along in familiar survival situations and with native speakers accustomed to foreigners.	• I can buy my basic foodstuffs, rent a hotel room, and bargain where appropriate. • I can talk about my favorite pastimes or hobbies. • I can describe how to get from here to places like the post office, a restaurant, or a local tourist attraction. • I can talk about things that happened in the past or might happen in the future. • I can carry on simple conversations with native speakers who are used to dealing with foreigners. • I can perform at least two of the tasks at the advanced level.
ADVANCED	• Can participate in most casual and some work conversations. Can give simple directions or explanations at work. Can talk about past and future events. With a minimum of repetition and rewording, can get the gist of normal conversation by native speakers. • Vocabulary is good enough to speak simply with only a few circumlocutions and can speak extemporaneously on many topics. Accent clearly that of a learner, but can generally be understood.	• I can describe my work in some detail and discuss with my co-workers most work-related tasks. • I can talk comfortably about topics of general interest, such as the weather and current events. • I can deal with and explain unexpected problems, such as losing my traveler's checks. • I can take and give messages by telephone. • I can be understood by most native speakers, and I can follow normal conversations involving native speakers. • I can perform at least one task at the advanced plus level.
ADVANCED PLUS	• Can handle most work requirements and conversations on topics of particular interest. Can express facts, give instructions, describe, report and talk about current, past, and future activities. • Often speaks fluently and easily, though occasionally pauses to think of a word. Continues to make some grammatical errors. • In dealing with native speakers, understands common rules of etiquette, taboos, and sensitivities, and handles routine social situations when dealing with people accustomed to foreigners.	• I can hire an employee, discuss qualifications, duties, hours, and pay in my new language. • I can instruct a coworker on how to perform a common task. • I can give opinions, facts, and explain points of view. • I can talk with ease about my past, my current activities, and what I hope to do in the future. • I can generally speak easily and fluently with only minor pauses. • I can make culturally acceptable requests, accept or refuse invitations, apologize, and offer and receive gifts. • I can perform at least two of the tasks at the superior level.

SUPERIOR	• Can converse on most practical, social and professional topics. Can deal with unfamiliar topics, provide explanations, resolve problems, describe in detail, offer supported opinions, and hypothesize. Beginning to talk about abstract ideas. • Rarely has to grope for a word. Control of grammar is good and errors almost never bother the native speaker. • Can participate appropriately in most social and work situations. Understands most nonverbal responses; beginning to understand culture-related humor.	• I can carry out most work assignments in the target language. • I can handle routine social situations with ease. • I can participate effectively in most general discussions involving native speakers. • I can handle normal telephone conversations. • I can listen to a radio program, oral report, or speech and take accurate notes. • I can deal with an unexpected problem or a social blunder. • I can support my opinions in a discussion or argument. • I am beginning to understand jokes and word play. • I seldom have to ask speakers to repeat or explain. • I can speak at a normal rate of speed, without groping for words or trying to avoid complex grammatical structures.
DISTINGUISHED	• Can use the language fluently and accurately on all levels of professional need. Can tailor language to fit the audience: counsel, persuade, negotiate, represent a point of view, and interpret for dignitaries. • Speaks with only rare pronunciation or grammar errors. • Picks up on most nonverbal cues; understands humor and most allusions. Behaves in a culturally appropriate manner in a range of social and professional settings.	• I can carry out any job responsibility in my second language. • I can speak appropriately to a professional group, my staff, a government official, a friend, the elderly and children. • I rarely make pronunciation or grammar errors. • I always understand native speakers, even when they are talking to each other. • I can participate in joking, including puns and word play. • I can read cultural gestures, body language and facial expressions accurately.
NATIVE COMPETENCE	• Functions as would an educated native speaker.	• I am equally as fluent in my second language as in English. • I have command of idioms, colloquialisms, and historical and literary allusions. • I am well-versed on the history, beliefs, customs, politics, and geography of my host country. • I am completely at ease culturally in any social or professional setting.

USEFUL INFOR- MATION

LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES FOR COMPREHENDING, REMEMBERING, PRACTICING AND COMMUNICATING

This useful list of strategies was developed for Peace Corps by Anita L. Wenden. You may wish to use it as part of a training session for both Trainees during PST and instructors at your TOT.

COMPREHENDING & REMEMBERING

The following is a list of strategies learners use to understand and/or remember what they attend to when they are learning a new language.

- Listen for it to recur.
- Make associations.
- Compare it with an idea/word already learned.
- Repeat it silently.
- Use a visual image to remember.
- Play back in your mind the sound of the word, phrase, or longer language sequence.
- Relate new information to what you already know.
- Think about similarities in structure between different phrases.
- Write it down.
- Try to explain the meaning to yourself.

PRACTICING

The following is a list of strategies language learners use to practice what they want to learn.

- Make friends with native speakers.
- Think in the native language (NL).
- Attend events where the NL is used.
- Eavesdrop on conversations in the NL.
- Listen to the radio.
- Converse internally with oneself in the NL.
- Make sentences with a new word.
- Make sentences with a new structure.

- Visualize situations when the word may be used.
- Visualize situations when the structure may be used.
- Role play situations where you would use the structure or vocabulary with your learning partner or informant.
- Describe your day to your informant/learning partner.

COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: LISTENING

Learners use the following strategies to help themselves understand.

- Ask the speaker to say it in other words.
- Say what you understood & verify its accuracy (Do you mean that...?).
- Ask the speaker to repeat the word or sentence.
- Ask the speaker to speak more slowly.
- Ask the speaker to restate in simple terms.
- Ask questions about the content of what the speaker said.
- Ask the speaker to explain the word/sentence/phrase (What do you mean by...?).
- Stop the speaker for an explanation.
- Repeat a word or phrase to be sure you've understood (Did you say...?).
- Repeat the utterance up to the part you did not understand and ask (He ran around the *what*?).
- Prepare for the conversation ahead of time with your informant.
- Concentrate very hard.
- Self-question.
- Use your background knowledge.
- Use your linguistic knowledge.
- Use the following clues to guess the meaning: key words; the part of the sentence you understand; the topic of the conversation; the purpose of the conversation; body language; intonation of the speaker; the social setting.

COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES: SPEAKING

The following are strategies language learners use to express their meaning in their new language.

- Try to imitate something you heard previously.
- Say it in other words.
- Invent a new word or expression.
- Use a word with almost the same meaning.
- Use a substitute word.
- Use gestures.
- Describe the object/event.
- Borrow a word from English & change the pronunciation.
- Translate word for word from English.
- Use a simple sentence.
- Use a structure you know.
- Use examples to explain your meaning.
- Request help.
- Stall for time.
- Decide not to talk at all.
- Change the topic.

HOW TO DO IT

INCORPORATING LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES INTO LANGUAGE TASKS

The following suggestions were developed to provide language instructors with an awareness of useful language learning strategies and some possible techniques for presenting and practicing them in their classes, before, during, and after language tasks. These strategies can help the learner to prepare for a language task, to regulate the task or to repair breakdowns while it is underway, and afterwards to evaluate success, identify problem areas, and work on memorizing new material. These techniques apply equally to self-directed language learning after PST, and thus should be explicitly introduced and practiced during training. When teaching self-directed learning techniques, discussion of strategies will be involved for each step of the process. The strategies should include those that have been included in regular classroom instruction, and there will be new ones to fit the less structured learning situation. Trainees can brainstorm additional strategies for the different stages of the self-directed learning process.

STRATEGIES USED BEFORE A LANGUAGE TASK: PREDICTING AND PLANNING

Rationale: In order to help Trainees learn more effective ways to tackle language tasks, teachers can introduce the strategy of predicting very early in training.

Strategy 1: Predicting with Pictures

When introducing a dialog on shopping, show the Trainees a drawing of a market scene or store with a customer and a salesperson. Ask Trainees questions about the scene before presenting the dialog.

"Suppose you are in this situation. What kinds of things does this store sell? What questions will you need to ask? What kinds of answers can you expect?"

Strategy 2: What do I have to do?

- Selective attention (Ask Trainees to decide what areas they will need to listen/read for and what they can ignore.)
- Read or listen for specifics, e.g., departure time and flight numbers at airport, numbers in discussion of ages/weights.
- Anticipate words that indicate that the topic you care about is under discussion.

Strategy 3: Systematic Review

Review of relevant material before beginning new topic, e.g., review numbers for telling time or before shopping competency, past tense for telling about recent events, formulaic phrases, cultural do's and don't's.

STRATEGIES USED DURING A LANGUAGE TASK: REGULATING AND PROBLEM- SOLVING

Other Predicting Strategies:

- Identify potential problem areas (pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary limits, hard to hear announcements); What are the most important item(s) to be listen for or to produce? What are the key words, phrases, or phonetic/grammatical features you will need? (content words, numbers, etc.)
- Reflect on similar transactions, exchanges, or situations which you have experienced in the past; recall how those transactions, etc., proceeded, language used, etc.
- Play a tape recording or show a video of the event.
- Teachers can provide continued opportunities for practicing the strategies of predicting and planning when preparing Trainees for community contact assignments, host family interview tasks, or projects related to technical areas.

Strategies useful during a language task can be introduced and practiced in a language lesson by altering a familiar technique or introducing a new activity that focuses on the strategy as well as on the learning strategy.

Strategy 1: Circumlocution

Trainees play a game where one selects an item and others have to guess the fruit, country, locations, person, professions, etc., from a description that doesn't name the target item.

Strategy 2: Role Playing

Using gestures and pantomime to make meaning clear
Teacher can also teach culturally appropriate gestures to indicate past time, emphasis, lack of comprehension, emotions, etc.

Strategy 3: Picture It

Trainees learn to make simple drawings/maps and requests for others to draw or make a map

Strategy 4: Make a Guess

Trainees can do listening and reading exercises that require them to draw on the context (grammatical clues, meaning, etc.) to guess the meaning of the text.

Strategy 5: Asking for explanation, verification, rephrasing or examples

The teacher deliberately uses an unfamiliar word, misstates an answer, or builds a misunderstanding into a dialog;
Trainees need to learn appropriate phrases to ask for explanation, clarification, etc.

Strategy 6: Recognize turn-taking cues in conversation

Teachers include these signals in dialogs and point them out.

Strategy 7: Verifying predictions and guesses

The teacher asks students to write down likely answers to question that student will be asking (host family members, vendor, taxi driver, etc.). These are reviewed after language event to check on guesses. Analyze for possible miscommunication. Trainees predict the words they expect to hear/read in a given text or taped conversation, weather broadcast, etc. They are checked afterwards.

STRATEGIES APPLIED AFTER A LANGUAGE TASK: EVALUATING AND REMEMBERING

Strategy 8: Activate new vocabulary

Require Trainees to use new vocabulary items in practicing material in a new competency or reviewing a competency already introduced and practiced.

Other Regulating Strategies:

Several strategies that learners can use during a language task are not easily practiced in an observable way. These strategies can be introduced in a written form in English, but are not actually teachable. • Check comprehension continually ("Is this making sense?" "Do they understand me?")

- Focus on what I know how to say, including language structures, topics, etc.
- Visualize: make a mental picture/image of what you are hearing or reading.

SELF-EVALUATION STRATEGIES

Strategy 1: Feedback on the Task

- Was the goal accomplished?
- Was the task easier or more difficult than expected?
- What caused problems?
- Have Trainees ask for and give feedback to each other.

Strategy 2: debrief after a community contact assignment

Strategy 3: Journaling

Help Trainees develop language learning journals, practice their use and have Trainees keep notes in their journals:

- Describe strategies used before and during activity
- What worked?
- What will you do differently next time?

Strategy 4: summarize or list main points

Strategy 5: Look it up

Have Trainees practice using references (dictionaries, text books, etc.) to look up grammar/vocabulary items

Strategy 6: give yourself a test

Have Trainees practice making up their own tests over language tasks and activities. (fill in blanks, etc.)

MEMORIZATION TRICKS

There is a lot of memory work involved in learning a new language. Teachers can focus Trainees on specific strategies they can use to help remember grammar paradigms or vocabulary etc. These can be introduced systematically throughout the language program.

- Group new words by category.
- Move or hold real objects.
- Use more than one context.
- Work with partner to quiz on vocabulary.
- Act out/pantomime new word/phrase.
- Personalize.
- Draw a picture, write a word.
- Cognates, false cognates.

SAMPLES FROM THE FIELD

STRATEGIES FOR CONTINUING LANGUAGE LEARNING AT POST

This list of strategies was developed by Peace Corps Nepal to help Volunteers continue learning Nepali after PST.

Strategies for Continuing Language Learning At Your Post

1. You may want to post charts on conjugation and the Devanagari alphabet on a wall in your room and go through them once a day. It is vital that you keep reminding yourself and reinforcing these learning - otherwise your language will begin to slip.
2. Read simple short stories and primers to increase your comprehension. Reading will expand your vocabulary and build confidence. (Your fluency, however, will only really develop through speaking practice.) Note down the words and structures that you don't understand while reading so that you can later ask your colleagues, counterparts, and family members.
3. Take risks ! Make mistakes, but learn from them. Learn to laugh at your own mistakes and not get discouraged. If you let people know that you laugh at your mistakes, they will feel freer to laugh with you, rather than behind your back. Your willingness to be the object of a certain amount of laughter will strengthen the bonds of friendship between yourself and those whose language you are learning.
4. Guessing is a very important part of foreign language learning. Even very advanced learners have to rely on guessing (learning from context). Your guesses and assumptions may prove incorrect, but the number of correct guesses will improve with practice. Don't be discouraged by incorrect guesses - realize that you are learning even when you are not totally correct. Keep trying and forcing yourself to make guesses rather than giving up as you follow the flow of a native speaker's conversation. The more you try, the better you will get. After some practice, you will probably find that it is not necessary to understand the meaning of every word or phrase in order to understand the message. Learn to treat uncertainty as part of your learning process.

5. Errors are a natural and necessary part of language learning. The learner who makes no errors makes no progress. Keeping a record of your errors in your language notebook will help you to remember and learn from your mistakes. Recognizing errors is the first step in minimizing them.

6. Since you are responsible for your own learning, you also need to encourage and reward yourself when you make progress (You won't have the benefit of positive, supportive feedback from training staff). Pay attention to your successes in learning and communicating and recognize your own progress. Build your confidence by self-acknowledgment: "I understood nearly everything my co-worker said today!", or "Even Hajur Amaa understood me!" are important steps in language building.

7. Keep a simple journal in Nepali. If you can explain to yourself in simple writing what is happening to you on a daily basis, you are on the road to real conversational fluency. A Nepali journal is a terrific milestone record of your progress and forces you to find ways to express your intimate thoughts, feelings and experiences in Nepali. It also allows you to practice your Nepali without the pressure of someone standing in front of you trying to decipher your meaning. Writing to yourself regularly allows you to try new words and structures without worrying about errors.

8. Spend time talking to children. They can be the best language learning resources around. Enjoy it. Make conversations fun. You'll get no argument from the kids about it, and you are very unlikely to hurt anyone's feelings.

9. Make sure you spend a few hours every day talking with local people with whom you feel comfortable. Seek them out. Listen to their concerns, problems, needs, etc. Try to follow their conversations and keep track of how much you understand - 10%; 40%, 70%.

10. Look for people who earnestly want to improve their English and force them to speak English to you as you speak to them in Nepali.

11. Initiate and try to control conversations. Waiting for others to start conversations with you guarantees that you lose control over the content of the conversation from the outset.

12. Organize your language notebook and update and review it. It won't do you any good if you don't use it.

13. Use your question formulating skills to get the information you need. Asking the wrong question enhances your chances of becoming frustrated by an off track and hard to understand answer.

14. In addition to the resources you received in training, there are other resources that you may want to consider purchasing for yourself, e.g., *Intermediate Structured Nepali*, the Mathews book, and *Where Do I Go From Here*, may be of some help to some of you.

15. Take charge of your language learning. Check with the Training Office for additional support if you find your own efforts are not taking you anywhere. The Training Office will consider reimbursing local language informants/teachers/trainers, and, if none seem available, will also consider sending out a Peace Corps trainer to train someone in your area to help you.

16. The Training Office has additional resource materials available for other languages and dialects used in Nepal. However, it is advisable for you to get to a point where you feel comfortable in Nepali before embarking on learning a new language.

17. The Training Office will schedule a Language In-Service Training (LIST) for you between four and eight months after your swearing-in. A needs assessment will be conducted beforehand, and you are strongly encouraged to take a careful and analytical approach in responding to the survey. Tell us what you need to be able to say and where you are encountering difficulties. Your IST will be targeted on the basis of the responses of all the people in your training group. Make sure your voice and your needs are heard.

18. Be assertive, optimistic, diligent and patient in your efforts and your language will steadily improve.

Language

Volunteers are encouraged to actively continue language learning. The Training Office will schedule a Language In-Service Training for first year PCVs between 4 and 8 months after swearing-in. The Training Office can also make available resource materials for continued self-directed learning in Nepali and its dialects (Bajhangi, Baitedeli, Jumli, Doti, etc.) as well as Hindi, Bhojpuri, Abadhi, Rai, Limbu, Tamang, Gurung, etc., provide suggestions for preparing and using local people as language trainers, and help PCVs develop targeted and effective individual language learning strategies.

Volunteers are encouraged to discuss their particular language needs with the Training Office. As a general suggestion, PCVs should create a language learning plan that starts with the immediate communication needs of the PCV. Based on those needs, a strategy that includes self-directed study using resource materials, solicits specific help from Nepali on-the-job colleagues, and maximizes the involvement of those in the local community in a planned and structured way, has the highest chance of success. With the prior approval of the Training Office, PCVs can be reimbursed for language trainer costs using a local language informant/ trainer. As a last resort, and with the Program Officer's approval, the Training Office will consider hiring a language trainer to send out to post for temporary support and on-site resource and strategy building, including providing brief training to local language trainers/informants.

All Volunteers will be tested for language proficiency in Nepali, based on the language competency objectives set forth and shared with Trainees, at the end of Pre-Service Training. Volunteers who are about to COS and desire a certification of language proficiency in Nepali are encouraged to contact the Training Office to arrange for a proficiency interview.

SAMPLE SESSION PLAN

LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES TRAINING SESSION (USING SILL)

OBJECTIVES

- To briefly summarize and review language learning activities which have been used during the pre-service training language program
- To give the Trainees an opportunity to identify specific preferred language learning activities
- To allow the Trainees to begin thinking how they can best approach the language learning task on a personal level

MINIMUM TIME

90 minutes

ACTIVITIES DESCRIPTION

Introduction to the Session (5 mins.)

The facilitator greets the Trainees and introduces the title and goals of the session. The facilitator defines "Language Learning Styles" and then invites Trainees participation by asking "Why do you think it might be useful/important to take a language learning styles survey?" Briefly summarize the Trainees responses and add that: 1. so far during PST the Trainees have been exposed to various activities which are based on appealing to different learning styles; and 2. the goal now is to get the Trainees thinking specifically about their learning habits with the purpose of increasing the effectiveness of their study of Hungarian, especially in preparation for the time when PST ends and they go to their posts.

Introduction to the Survey (5 mins.)

The facilitator distributes a copy of the SILL [NOT the interpretation sheets at this time!] to each Trainee. The facilitator briefly describes the format of the survey/quiz and explains how the survey is completed. The facilitator reminds the Trainees that there are no inherently right or wrong answers. The facilitator also emphasizes that

it is important for the Trainees to answer all questions based on what they actually do, NOT based on what they think they should do or what "seems like a good idea."

Survey Completion (20 mins.)

The facilitator tells the Trainees to begin answering the questions and that they have approximately 20 minutes to complete the "test." The Trainees are reminded that they can ask questions of clarification of the facilitator at any time.

Survey Results/Analysis (45 mins.)

The Trainee are asked to calculate their score totals and to figure out the averages for the test. The facilitator then distributes the profile sheets and asks the Trainees to transfer their scores (averages) to the profile sheet. The facilitator then calls the Trainees attention to the "Key to Understanding . . ." and briefly reviews/explains, giving one or two examples from his/her own test; briefly explain the correlation between the "strategies" and the "average scores." The facilitator then graphs his/her answers, and asks the Trainees to do the same. The facilitator calls the Trainees attention to the "What These Averages Mean to You" section, adding explanations where needed.

- The facilitator reminds the Trainees that all of the questions and the profile explanations identify potentially useful language learning strategies (give examples from the questions and profiles). Advise the Trainees to review the questions and the profile in order to find out suggestions which they can try applying in order to increase their ability to learn more Hungarian language. Remind the Trainees that they have been practicing many of these strategies during the PST (elicit specific examples from the Trainees).

- The facilitator calls the Trainees attention to an interesting "fact": If they felt as though they wanted to or should have given a higher score to some of the questions, then it may indicate that they are already aware of and that they recognize that the technique may be useful. The Trainees should be encouraged to experiment with all of these strategies as they continue to learn Hungarian.

Questions (10 mins.)

The Trainees are given the opportunity to ask whatever questions they may have.

Conclusion (5 mins.)

The facilitator concludes the session by reminding the Trainees that they should try not to "prejudge" any of the techniques; they should, on the other hand, attempt to experiment with all of them, and to then decide if the strategies appeal to them.

**HANDOUTS/
VISUALS**

(SILL) Strategy Inventory for Language Learning, including scoring sheet and interpretations

SESSION NOTES FOR THE SILL TRAINING SESSION

You may wish to use this "Facilitator Script" on connection with the SILL lesson plan.

The first session this afternoon will focus on learning strategies. The main goals of the session are: to help you to identify or clarify your present learning strategies and preferences, and to make you aware of other potentially useful language learning strategies that you can try out. The first step is to take a strategies survey; after you have taken the survey, we will spend some time looking at the results and discussing the various strategies.

[distribute the survey now] [distribute ONLY the survey w/score sheet at this time; do not give out the Profile of Results (yet)]

This is a survey entitled the "Strategy Inventory for Language Learning." There are 80 questions which you rank on a scale of 1 to 5, according to your present use of specific language learning strategies and techniques. The survey will be most useful if you take care to answer according to what you actually do; you should NOT mark your answers according to what you think might or might not be a good idea. Again, the goal here is to help determine efforts you currently make in order to increase your learning capacity. There are no inherently right or wrong answers. Mark your scores on the sheet provided; when everyone is finished, we will examine and interpret your scores. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

[allow 20 minutes to answer the questions]

Now, calculate your results by adding the scores according to the columns indicated. Figure out your average score for each column (section). Also calculate your overall average by adding up the six SUM totals and dividing by 80, the number of questions in the survey.

[distribute the Profile of Results]

Now transfer your averages to the Profile of Results: write your AVERAGE SCORE from each section to the corresponding section on the Profile. The profile of results gives six general categories into which language learning strategies can be divided; specific learning activities/strategies are listed for each category. Using these strategies can have a positive influence on your language study. Before we look at the results, let's clarify something which is rather important: What do these scores NOT tell us. (whether or not we can learn a language) That's correct. These scores cannot be used to predict if or how well you will learn a language. Your overall average score indicates very generally to what degree you make use of language learning strategies. Your average scores for each section indicate to what degree you currently use the specific strategies listed for that section. The higher your score, the more often you probably make use of the strategies. A low score in any category can be taken as a suggestion to actively attempt to apply the other kinds of language learning strategies. You can review both the questions from the survey and the strategy categories and related activities in order to identify those with which you can experiment in trying to increase your ability to master the language. Let's look now at the individual categories. [name each category and cite some example strategies from the profile] Can anyone give a specific example of how they apply one or more of these activities? Try to think of instances from your language classes or other times you were studying [----]. Can you identify specific activities relating to the strategies which you have found to be quite useful from your PST? [The facilitator should be prepared to identify some of the strategy-specific activities which have been included thus far in the PST.]

Can you suggest any other activities, based on the survey and which you have not yet tried, which could be useful? Do you have any questions about the points raised in the survey or during the discussions? I hope that the session has provided an opportunity for you to examine somewhat your language learning habits, and to suggest things with which you can experiment, both during the rest of PST and again once you arrive at your post. I encourage you to try out some of those strategies which you may not use, even if you don't think right now that they sound very useful. You may find that they are in fact useful to you or you may even find other ways of applying the strategies.

Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL)
Version for English Speakers Learning a New Language
Rebecca Oxford, 1989

Directions

The Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) is designed to gather information about how you, as a student of a foreign or second language, go about learning that language. On the following pages, you will find statements related to learning a new language. Please read each statement. On the separate answer sheet, mark the response (1, 2, 3, 4, or 5) that tells how true the statement is in terms of *what you actually do when you are learning the new language*.

1. Never or almost never true of me
2. Generally not true of me
3. Somewhat true of me
4. Generally true of me
5. Always or almost always true of me

Never or almost never true of me means that the statement is very rarely true of you; that is, you do the behavior which is described in the statement only in very rare instances.

Generally not true of me means that the statement is usually not true of you; that is, you do the behavior which is described in the statement less than half the time, but more than in very rare instances.

Somewhat true of me means that the statement is true of you about half the time; that is, sometimes you do the behavior which is described in the statement, and sometimes you don't, and these instances tend to occur with about equal frequency.

Generally true of me means that the statement is usually true of you; that is, you do the behavior which is described in the statement more than half the time.

Always or almost always true of me means that the statement is true of you in almost all circumstances; that is, you almost always do the behavior which is described in the statement.

Use the separate Worksheet for recording your answers and for scoring. Answer in terms of how well the statement describes you, not in terms of what you think you should do, or what other people do. Answer in reference to the language you are now learning (or the language you most recently learned). There are no right or wrong responses to these statements. Work carefully but quickly. You will score the SILL yourself using the attached Worksheet. On the Worksheet, write your name, the date, and the language learned.

Example

1. Never or almost never true of me
2. Generally not true of me
3. Somewhat true of me
4. Generally true of me
5. Always or almost always true of me

Read the item and choose a response (1 through 5 as above) and write it in the space after the item.

I actively seek out opportunities to talk with native speakers of the new language.

You have just completed the example item. Answer the rest of the items on the Worksheet.

Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL)

1. Never or almost never true of me
2. Generally not true of me
3. Somewhat true of me
4. Generally true of me
5. Always or almost always true of me

(Write answers on Worksheet)

Part A

When learning a new word...

1. I create associations between new material and what I already know.
2. I put the new word in a sentence so I can remember it.
3. I place the new word in a group with other words that are similar in some way (for example, words related to clothing or feminine nouns).
4. I associate the sound of the new word with the sound of a familiar word.
5. I use rhyming to remember it.
6. I remember the word by making a clear mental image of it or by drawing a picture.
7. I visualize the spelling of the new word in my mind.
8. I use a combination of sounds and images to remember the new word.
9. I list all the other words I know that are related to the new word and draw lines to show relationships.
10. I remember where the new word is located on the page or where I first saw or heard it.
11. I use flash cards with the new word on one side and the definition or other information on the other.
12. I physically act out the new word.

When learning new material...

13. I review often.
14. I schedule my reviewing so that the review sessions are initially close together in time and gradually become more widely spread apart.
15. I go back to refresh my memory of things I learned much earlier.

1. Never or almost never true of me
2. Generally not true of me
3. Somewhat true of me
4. Generally true of me
5. Always or almost always true of me

(Write answers on Worksheet)

Part B

16. I say or write new expressions repeatedly to practice them.
17. I imitate the way native speakers talk.
18. I read a story or dialogue several times until I can understand it.
19. I revise what I write in the new language to improve my writing.
20. I practice the sounds or alphabet of the new language.
21. I use idioms or other routines in the new language.
22. I use familiar words in different combinations to make new sentences.
23. I initiate conversations in the new language.
24. I watch TV shows or movies or listen to the radio in the new language.
25. I try to think in the new language.
26. I attend and participate in out-of-class events where the new language is spoken.
27. I read for pleasure in the new language.
28. I write personal notes, messages, letters, or reports in the new language.
29. I skim the reading passage first to get the main idea, then I go back and read it more carefully.
30. I seek specific details in what I hear or read.
31. I use reference materials such as glossaries or dictionaries to help me use the new language.
32. I take notes in class in the new language.
33. I make summaries of new language material.
34. I apply general rules to new situations when using the language.
35. I find the meaning of a word by dividing the word into parts which I understand.
36. I look for similarities and contrasts between the new language and my own.
37. I try to understand what I have heard or read without translating it word-for-word into my own language.
38. I am cautious about transferring words or concepts directly from my language to the new language.
39. I look for patterns in the new language.
40. I develop my own understanding of how the language works, even if sometimes I have to revise my understanding based on new information.

1. Never or almost never true of me
2. Generally not true of me
3. Somewhat true of me
4. Generally true of me
5. Always or almost always true of me

(Write answers on Worksheet)

Part C

41. When I do not understand all the words I read or hear, I guess the general meaning by using any clue I can find, such as clues from the context or situation.
42. I read without looking up every unfamiliar word.
43. In a conversation, I anticipate what the other person is going to say based on what has been said so far.
44. If I am speaking and cannot think of the right expression, I use gestures or switch back to my own language momentarily.
45. I ask the other person to tell me the right word if I cannot think of it in a conversation.
46. When I cannot think of the correct expression to say or write, I find a different way to express the idea; for example, I use a synonym or describe the idea.
47. I make up new words if I do not know the right ones.
48. I direct the conversation to a topic for which I know the words.

Part D

49. I preview the language lesson to get a general idea of what it is about, how it is organized, and how it relates to what I already know.
50. When someone is speaking the new language, I try to concentrate on what the person is saying and put unrelated topics out of my mind.
51. I decide in advance to pay special attention to specific language aspects; for example, I focus on the way native speakers pronounce certain sounds.
52. I try to find out all I can about how to be a better language learner by reading books or articles, or by talking with others about how to learn.
53. I arrange my schedule to study and practice the new language consistently, not just when there is the pressure of a test.
54. I arrange my physical environment to promote learning; for instance, I find a quiet, comfortable place to review.
55. I organize my language notebook to record important language information.
56. I plan my goals for language learning, for instance, how proficient I want to become or how I might want to use the language in the long run.
57. I plan what I am going to accomplish in language learning each day or each week.
58. I prepare for an upcoming language task (such as giving a talk in the new language) by considering the nature of the task, what I have to know, and my current language skills.
59. I clearly identify the purpose of the language activity; for instance, in a listening task I might need to listen for the general idea or for specific facts.
60. I take responsibility for finding opportunities to practice the new language.
61. I actively look for people with whom I can speak the new language.
62. I try to notice my language errors and find out the reasons for them.
63. I learn from my mistakes in using the new language.
64. I evaluate the general progress I have made in learning the language.

1. Never or almost never true of me
2. Generally not true of me
3. Somewhat true of me
4. Generally true of me
5. Always or almost always true of me

(Write answers on Worksheet)

Part E

65. I try to relax whenever I feel anxious about using the new language.
66. I make encouraging statements to myself so that I will continue to try hard and do my best in language learning.
67. I actively encourage myself to take wise risks in language learning, such as guessing meanings or trying to speak, even though I might make some mistakes.
68. I give myself a tangible reward when I have done something well in my language learning.
69. I pay attention to physical signs of stress that might affect my language learning.
70. I keep a private diary or journal where I write my feelings about language learning.
71. I talk to someone I trust about my attitudes and feelings concerning the language learning process.

Part F

72. If I do not understand, I ask the speaker to slow down, repeat, or clarify what was said.
73. I ask other people to verify that I have understood or said something correctly.
74. I ask other people to correct my pronunciation.
75. I work with other language learners to practice, review or share information.
76. I have a regular language learning partner.
77. When I am talking with a native speaker, I try to let him or her know when I need help.
78. In conversation with others in the new language, I ask questions in order to be as involved as possible and to show I am interested.
79. I try to learn about the culture of the place where the new language is spoken.
80. I pay close attention to the thoughts and feelings of other people with whom I interact in the new language.

pt. A	pt. B	pt. C	pt. D	pt. E	pt. F	
<u>1.</u>	<u>16.</u>	<u>41.</u>	<u>49.</u>	<u>65.</u>	<u>72.</u>	SUM col. A _____
<u>2.</u>	<u>17.</u>	<u>42.</u>	<u>50.</u>	<u>66.</u>	<u>73.</u>	SUM col. B _____
<u>3.</u>	<u>18.</u>	<u>43.</u>	<u>51.</u>	<u>67.</u>	<u>74.</u>	SUM col. C _____
<u>4.</u>	<u>19.</u>	<u>44.</u>	<u>52.</u>	<u>68.</u>	<u>75.</u>	SUM col. D _____
<u>5.</u>	<u>20.</u>	<u>45.</u>	<u>53.</u>	<u>69.</u>	<u>76.</u>	SUM col. E _____
<u>6.</u>	<u>21.</u>	<u>46.</u>	<u>54.</u>	<u>70.</u>	<u>77.</u>	SUM col. F _____
<u>7.</u>	<u>22.</u>	<u>47.</u>	<u>55.</u>	<u>71.</u>	<u>78.</u>	
<u>8.</u>	<u>23.</u>	<u>48.</u>	<u>56.</u>		<u>79.</u>	
<u>9.</u>	<u>24.</u>		<u>57.</u>		<u>80.</u>	
<u>10.</u>	<u>25.</u>		<u>58.</u>			
<u>11.</u>	<u>26.</u>		<u>59.</u>			
<u>12.</u>	<u>27.</u>		<u>60.</u>			
<u>13.</u>	<u>28.</u>		<u>61.</u>			
<u>14.</u>	<u>29.</u>		<u>62.</u>			
<u>15.</u>	<u>30.</u>		<u>63.</u>			
	<u>31.</u>		<u>64.</u>			
	<u>32.</u>					
	<u>33.</u>					
	<u>34.</u>					
	<u>35.</u>					
	<u>36.</u>					
	<u>37.</u>					
	<u>38.</u>					
	<u>39.</u>					
	<u>40.</u>					
<u>SUM</u>	<u>SUM</u>	<u>SUM</u>	<u>SUM</u>	<u>SUM</u>	<u>SUM</u>	
+ 15 =	+ 25 =	+ 8 =	+ 16 =	+ 7 =	+ 9 =	+ 80 =
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Profile of Results on the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL)

You will be given this Profile after you have completed the Worksheet for Answering & Scoring the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL). This Profile will summarize your results on SILL and show the kind of strategies you use in learning a new language. Please note that there are no right or wrong answers and no "best" average scores for each part, since people learn languages differently. To complete this Profile, transfer your averages for each part of the SILL, and for the whole SILL, from the Worksheet.

Part What Strategies Covered

Your Average on This Part

- A. Remembering More Effectively: Grouping; making associations; placing new words into a context to remember them; using imagery, sounds, sound-and-image combinations, actions, etc. in order to remember new expressions; reviewing in a structured way; going back to review earlier material.
- B. Using Your Mental Processes: Repeating; practicing with sounds & writing systems; using formulas & patterns; recombining familiar items in new ways; practicing the new language in a variety of authentic situations involving the four skills (listening, reading, speaking, and writing); skimming & scanning to get the idea quickly; using reference resources; taking notes; summarizing; reasoning deductively (applying general rules); analyzing expressions; analyzing contrastively via comparisons with another language; being cautious about word-for-word translating and direct transfers from another language; looking for language patterns; adjusting your understanding according to new information.
- C. Compensating For Missing Knowledge: Using all possible clues to guess the meaning of what is heard or read in the new language; trying to understand the overall meaning and not necessarily every single word; finding ways to get the message across in speaking or writing despite limited knowledge of the new language; for instance, using gestures, switching to your own language momentarily, using a synonym or description, coining new words.
- D. Organizing & Evaluating Your Learning: Overviewing & linking with material you already know; deciding in general to pay attention; deciding to pay attention to specific details; finding out how language learning works; arranging to learn (schedule, environment, notebook); setting goals and objectives; identifying the purpose of a language task; planning for a language task; finding practice opportunities; noticing & learning from your errors; evaluating your progress.
- E. Managing Your Emotions: Lowering your anxiety; encouraging yourself through positive statements; taking risks wisely; rewarding yourself; noting physical stress; keeping a language diary; talking with someone about your feelings/attitudes.
- F. Learning With Others: Asking questions for clarification or verification; asking for correction; cooperating with peers; cooperating with proficient users of the new language; developing cultural awareness; becoming aware of other's thoughts and feelings.

Key to Understanding Your Averages

High	Always or almost always used	4.5 to 5.0
	Generally used	3.5 to 4.4
Medium	Sometimes used	2.5 to 3.4
	Generally not used	1.5 to 2.4
Low	Never or almost never used	1.0 to 1.4

Graph Your Averages Here

If you want, you can make a graph of your SILL averages. What does this graph tell you? Are you very high or very low on any part?



What These Averages Mean to You

The overall average indicates how frequently you use language learning strategies in general. The averages for each part of the SILL show which groups of strategies you tend to use the most in learning a new language. You might find that the averages for each part of the SILL are more useful than your overall average.

Optimal use of language learning strategies depends on your age, personality, stage of language learning, purpose for learning the language, previous experience and other factors. Nevertheless, there may be some language learning strategies that you are not yet using which might be beneficial to you.

OVER VIEW

SELF-STUDY LESSONS FOR PST

The following six lessons are written for PST language instructors to use during PST as part of the language training program. They will serve as models for Volunteers to use when they are in their sites and preparing their own self-study learning plans. Using these lessons as a model, the trainers can write additional lessons that the Trainees can do on their own. In addition, the language trainers can help the Trainees learn how to write their own self-study lessons.

The first two lessons are meant to be done in order, at the beginning of PST. The others can be used in any order, according to what makes sense in relation to what's happening in the rest of the training program. However, Mapping and Buying Things are best suited for use at a training site, and Family Tree and Learning a Craft will work well once Trainees have moved in with host families or during a village stay portion of training.

- Introductory Lesson
- Observation
- Mapping
- Buying Things
- Family Tree
- Learning a Craft

SAMPLE SESSION PLAN

INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITY TO PST: SELF-STUDY LESSONS

OVERVIEW DESCRIPTION

Trainees reflect on an independent learning experience in their past (not a language learning experience) in order to identify key elements in any independent learning situation.

PURPOSE

To introduce the Volunteers to the concept of self-study learning and to help them see that they have already had many successful experiences learning things on their own.

STEPS

1. Trainer asks Trainees to choose a time in their past when they learned something on their own (give examples such as learning to ride a bicycle as a child; learning to play the piano; learning a sport). Tell them this can anything that they learned on their own outside a classroom, but it cannot be a language. Give them a few minutes to choose the situation.

2. Ask them to write down the answers to the following questions. 10 minutes.

- What did you try to learn?
- How did you learn it?
- How successful were you?
- What role did other people play in your learning, if any?
- Why did you decide to learn it alone?
- What helped your learning?
- What hindered your learning?

3. Trainees share in pairs their independent learning experiences. 10 minutes.

4. With the whole class, ask each pair to tell the others what topic they talked about the most

5. General discussion—ask the Trainees:

- What did you learn about learning on your own from doing this exercise?
- What general themes do you see running through the answers to the above question? [Have one of the Trainees make a list on a large piece of paper or the blackboard.] The kinds of answers you're looking for relate to learning by doing, learning by getting help from other people, making clever use of the materials and resources at hand, organizing and planning the learning, assessing their progress, their motivation and how it affected their learning.
- What questions and/or concerns are you left with about learning on your own? [Make a list of them on a large piece of paper, if possible, and keep them posted in the classroom for the Trainees to see and look for answers to during the rest of PST.]
- Show Trainees the "Learning Plan in a Nutshell" and help them connect the learning process they went through with this way of conceptualizing and describing it:

The Plan in a Nutshell

1. Decide what you want to learn.
2. Develop a lesson.
Check for accuracy.
3. Practice the lesson.
4. Use it.
5. Evaluate.
Plan your next lesson.

SAMPLE SESSION PLAN

OBSERVATION

OVERVIEW DESCRIPTION

The Trainees take an excursion as observers into the area near the training site. They return to the classroom to share their observations with their classmates and to discuss what they learned from the experience about the culture and language.

PURPOSE

This low risk activity is good to use early in the training program, perhaps as the first out-of-class experiential activity, for several reasons:

- To help the Trainees become aware of how much they can learn just by observing.
- To help them become aware of some of the differences in the new culture.
- To help them become comfortable going out on their own.
- It also serves the linguistic objective of helping the Trainees learn and practice descriptive adjectives and structures used in describing objects.

CLASSROOM PREPARATION

1. Explain to the students that they will each take a 15 minute walk outside the training site. During their walk they must choose one thing to describe to the class when they return. Suggest that they choose something that is different or not found in the U.S.

2. Distribute a paper with a series of questions (in English) to consider, such as:

- What is it?
- How big is it?
- What shape is it?
- What color is it?
- How much does it weigh?
- Is it always this size, shape, and color?
- Where is it usually found?
- Is it part of something else?
- Is it alive?

- Does it move?
- What does it look like?
- What is it used for? Follow this procedure:

(a) Have the Trainees read the questions and brainstorm adjectives and expressions that can be used for descriptions. Record these on the board in English.

(b) then write the target language on the board, but have the Trainees tell you the word—you tell them only when they can't get it themselves or when they are wrong (it is important for them to learn how to figure things out for themselves and how to help each other)

3. Remind the students that initially they should observe in order to get objective and descriptive data about what they see. Later, when they return to class, they can analyze their observations and express their opinions.

4. Now ask the Trainees what they will say if somebody asks them who they are and what they are doing. If they haven't already learned how to say these things, help them to learn a few—and don't forget to remind them of a magic phrase or two that will help them end a conversation politely if they begin to feel they can't understand anything and have lost control of the situation. For example:

Hello.

My name is ____.

I'm trying to learn ____.

I'm doing an assignment for my language class.

Can you tell me the ____ word for X?

I'm a Peace Corps Volunteer.

Thank you very much.

Sorry, I have to go back to class now.

5. Ask them if they feel ready—give short answers to any last minute questions they might have. Give them a pep talk about how much fun they're about to have on this big adventure and how easy it's going to be.

GOING OUT AND DOING IT

Send the Trainees off with their guideline questions and tell them to return at a specified time. Send them off in different directions to ensure that they work by themselves.

BACK IN THE CLASSROOM (LEARNING FROM THE EXPERIENCE)

Most likely the Trainees will come back excited about what they observed. Your job is to help them talk about what they observed in a way that will help them learn as much as possible from the experience about the language and the culture and about the value of developing skills in observation. Here are some ideas:

LANGUAGE EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES

- Start by giving the Trainees about fifteen minutes to review their notes and to write in their journal a detailed description of the object. Tell them to write down anything that happened that surprised them, and new questions they have about the language and culture. Also have them include in their journal any communication they had with people they saw or met during their observation. If they can use the language to write any of their observations, have them do so, but allow them to use English. The important point here is to get down their observations in either language.
- In pairs, the students read their descriptions to each other without naming the object. Through questioning (probably in English), each student tries to guess what the other's object is.
- In the large group (using English is okay), each student describes her object without referring to her written description. The other students guess what the object is.
- Post the written descriptions in the classroom for the students to read.
- Have the Trainees write the name of the object in Kiribati next to the description.

CULTURAL EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES

Ask each student to describe in English how they think the object reflects the host country culture and how it differs from what might be found in the U.S. At this point, you can ask other students their opinions and you can help answer any questions.

ABOUT HOW THE TRAINEES LEARNED

Ask the Trainees to think about how they did their observations. Did they walk around and talk with people? Did they stay in one place and quietly and unobtrusively observe? How did they feel while they were observing? What helped or hindered their ability to observe the object objectively? How did their own cultural biases affect the conclusions they drew about their object? Ask them how they used their language notebooks; have them share with each other what they wrote down and why as well as suggestions for using the notebook in the future.

FOLLOW UP

- Draw pictures of the object, label it with as many vocabulary words as possible and post the pictures in the classroom.
- Have the Trainees list new words in their notebooks that describe objects. Have them write questions that they might ask a native speaker in order to get more information.

SAMPLE SESSION PLAN

MAPPING

OVERVIEW DESCRIPTION

The Trainees go in pairs to one of the three main sections of town to draw a map of the area. They return to the classroom to show their maps to their classmates and to discuss what they learned from the experience about the culture and language.

PURPOSE

This is a low-risk activity for helping the Trainees become comfortable with going out on their own and communicating with strangers in the language. In addition to speaking and hearing the language in a real situation, they will have a first-hand experience with cultural differences related to how people interact in public and how they build and use their towns.

CLASSROOM PREPARATION

1. Tell the Trainees that today they will be going to one of the three main sections of Town, to gather information for drawing a map of the place when they go to. Each class will send at least two representatives to each place, who will work as a team. Each team's job will be to gather the information it needs to draw a map of its assigned area, complete with all streets and major buildings, properly labeled in the language. At a specified time, everyone will return to the classroom to report to their classmates and present their maps. (This means that each language class will end up with a map of and a report on each of the three places.)

2. Once the Trainees understand the general idea, your job is to help them gain confidence in their ability to go out and do this task. Mainly, this means you will help them learn the words and phrases they need to get the information to draw their maps and to explain what they are doing. They will also want to know how to begin and end their conversations with the people they will be meeting in a culturally appropriate manner—that is, politely.

Follow this procedure.

(a) Ask the Trainees what questions they want to be able to ask, to accomplish the task, and write the questions on the board in English. For example

What building is that?

What's the name of this street?

Does that building have a name?

How do you spell that?

(b) Then write the word on the board, but have the Trainees tell you the word—you tell them only when they can't get it themselves or when they are wrong. (It is important for them to learn how to figure things out for themselves and how to help each other.)

(c) Make a list on the board of the words and phrases the Trainees think they might hear as answers to these questions and then write the vocabulary, as you did with the questions, above. For example:

That's the Bank of Australia.

This is Main Street.

port

wharf

hardware store

school

church

college

grocery store

the Ministry of _____.

3. Help the Trainees learn how to ask the questions easily, fluently. You might start with some simple repetition drills, for example, and then let them practice saying them to each other, in pairs. The idea is for them to get to the point where they can make these new combinations of sounds and intonation patterns without stumbling. If they can do this in the classroom, with you, it will help give them the confidence they need to go out and do the task.

Then have them role-play a conversation with you and in pairs, with their classmates. This is to help them practice saying their questions and practice hearing the anticipated answers. Remember that the focus is recognizing answers, not producing language. Write what they say on the board; correct and add where necessary.

4. Now ask the Trainees what they will say before they ask their question and after they have gotten an answer, to end the exchange. Also, ask them what they will say if somebody asks them who they are and what they are doing. At this point in the training program they probably have already learned how to say these things. Help them to choose the best ones for this particular situation—and don't forget to remind them of a magic phrase or two that will help them end a conversation politely if they begin to feel they can't

understand anything and have lost control of the situation.

For example:

Excuse me.

May I ask you a question?

Hello.

Will you help me, please?

Can you spell that, please?

I'm trying to learn _____.

I'm trying to draw a map of _____ to show to my friends.

I'm a Peace Corps Volunteer.

Thank you very much.

Sorry, I have to go back to class now.

5. Ask them if they feel ready—give short answers to any last minute questions they might have. Give them a pep talk about how much fun they're about to have on this big adventure and how easy it's going to be. Remind them they have enough of the language to do the job and they have a partner with them to help. Tell them it's normal to feel a little anxious at a time like this. What's important is to maintain a sense of humor and look forward to surprises. Make it a challenge by telling them something like, "You are all ace language detectives and I'm sending you out to crack the secret code the people here use. Good luck!" Then, tell them to take a deep breath and go do it.

GOING OUT AND DOING IT

Send the Trainees out in pairs to their assigned towns. They can go by bus or you can drop them off in the Peace Corps vehicles, whichever suits your needs better. Make sure they take a notebook for writing down new things they hear and experience, and for drawing the map. Tell them how long they have for the task and when you expect them back. Allow enough time for them to get there and back, and to have at least an hour there to do the job. You might prepare them and send them out in the morning and have them return in the afternoon.

BACK IN THE CLASSROOM (LEARNING FROM THE EXPERIENCE)

Most likely the Trainees will come back excited about the experience, full of new and interesting things that happened to them. Your job is to help them talk about it in a way that will help them learn as much as possible from the experience about the language and the culture. Here are some ideas:

LANGUAGE EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES

- Start by giving them about fifteen minutes to write down in their notebooks the new words and phrases they heard, things that happened that surprised them, and new questions they have about the language and culture.
- Give each pair of Trainees a large sheet of paper and have them draw their map, complete with the names of

the streets and buildings. At this time, don't help them by making corrections or giving additional information.

- Post the three maps (there should be one each for each section of town) and let the Trainees walk around and look at them. Have them gather in front of each map, in turn, and have the people who drew it explain what is there. Invite the others to ask questions about the language (vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar). When a question is asked, see if one of the Trainees can answer it. If no one can answer it, then you give a short answer. Allow time for the Trainees to add names to their own maps or make other changes based on the discussions with the other groups.

CULTURAL EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES

- Now turn the Trainees' attention to the cultural aspects of the experience. Ask them what it was like doing the exercise. How did you feel? Embarrassed? Silly? Nervous? What was the reaction of the people you talked to? Did they say or do anything that surprised, angered, confused or frustrated you? How did their behavior and manner compare with the people where you come from? How did the layout of the town and the size, shape and function of the buildings compare with where you come from? Similarities? Differences? What do you think about these differences? What does the presence or absence of certain things say about the culture?

ABOUT HOW THE TRAINEES LEARNED

- Ask the Trainees to think about how they learned what they learned by doing this activity. Ask them how they liked learning outside the classroom on their own. Have them share the techniques that worked best for them. Have them talk about how they overcame their fear and nervousness. Ask them how they used their language notebooks. Have them share with each other what they wrote down and why, as well as suggestions for using the notebook in the future.

FOLLOW UP

- Keep the maps on the wall in the classroom. As the Trainees learn more about the towns, they can add to the maps. They can also use them for practicing giving directions and describing locations.
- Have the Trainees list the new words in their notebooks and write for five minutes about what they learned about towns and any reactions they had to asking a person for information.
- Bring all three classes together and have them compare their maps and how they went about doing the activity.

SAMPLE SESSION PLAN

BUYING THINGS

OVERVIEW DESCRIPTION

This lesson can be done near the training site or during site visits. The Trainees go in pairs to a store to buy a food item in preparation for preparing a group meal. They return to the classroom to share their experiences with their classmates and to discuss what they learned from the experience about culture and language.

PURPOSE

This is an activity for helping the Trainees become comfortable with going out on their own and buying something. In addition to speaking and hearing the language in a real situation, they will have a first hand experience with the culture of shopping in the language and they can try a little socializing with the shopkeeper or another customer.

CLASSROOM PREPARATION

1. Tell the Trainees that today they will go shopping for a food item to prepare a group meal. First they will make a menu. Then the items will be divided among the pairs of students who go out to buy the items. At a specified time, everyone will return to the classroom to report to their classmates.

2. Once the Trainees understand the general idea, your job is to help them gain confidence in their ability to go out and do this task. Mainly, this means you will help them learn the words and phrases they need to buy their items and to explain what they are doing. They will also want to know how to begin and end their conversations with the people they will be meeting in a culturally appropriate manner—that is, politely.

Follow this procedure:

(a) Ask the Trainees to tell you the items they want to eat at their group meal. Write the food items on the board—in Kiribati if the Trainees know the words; if not, in English. Encourage the students to find out the names of unknown items by asking in the language: What is this called in _____? Decide as a group on the menu and then divide up the items

among the Trainees into pairs and give each pair one or two items to buy.

(b) Ask the Trainees what questions they want to be able to ask, to accomplish the task and write the questions on the board in English. For example:

Do you have (X)?

I'd like (two cans).

How much is it?

I'm buying food for a group dinner.

Hello.

Thanks. Good-bye.

(b) then write the language on the board, but have the Trainees tell you the words—you tell them only when they can't get it themselves or when they are wrong. (It is important for them to learn how to figure things out for themselves and how to help each other.)

(c) make a list on the board of the words and phrases the Trainees think they might hear as answers to these questions and then write the vocabulary, as you did with the questions, above. For example:

Yes, (we have X).

Sorry, we'll out of X.

How many do you want?

It's \$X.

3. Help the Trainees learn how to say these phrases easily and fluently. You might start with some simple repetition drills, for example, and then let them practice saying them to each other, in pairs. The idea is for them to get to the point where they can make these new combinations of sounds and intonation patterns without stumbling. If they can do this in the classroom, with you, it will help give them the confidence they need to go out and do the task.

- Practice food vocabulary by using a chart with pictures of products and a price list. Have Trainees work in pairs and ask each other for the price of items.

- Play Concentration or Bingo. Practice money by having the Trainees count out real coins and bills in response to commands by you.

- Then have them role-play a conversation with you and in pairs, with their classmates. This is to help them practice saying their questions and practice hearing the anticipated answers. Remember that it is less important for them to be able to say the anticipated answers because they only have to recognize them when they hear them. Write what they say on the board; correct and add where necessary.

4. Ask the Trainees what they will say before they ask their question and after they have gotten an answer, to end the exchange. Also, ask them what they will say if somebody asks them who they are and what they are doing. At this

point in the training program they probably have already learned how to say these things. Help them to choose the best ones for this particular situation—and don't forget to remind them of a magic phrase or two that will help them end a conversation politely if they begin to feel they can't understand anything and have lost control of the situation.

For example:

Excuse me.

May I ask you a question?

Hello.

Will you help me, please?

Can you spell that, please?

I'm learning Kiribati.

I'm buying food for a dinner with my friends.

I'm a Peace Corps Volunteer.

Thank you very much.

Sorry, I have to go back to class now.

5. Ask them if they feel ready—give short answers to any last minute questions they might have. Give them a pep talk about how much fun they're about to have on this big adventure and how easy it's going to be. Remind them they have enough of the language to do the job and they have a partner with them to help. Tell them it's normal to feel a little anxious at a time like this. What's important is to maintain a sense of humor and look forward to surprises. Then, tell them to take a deep breath and go do it. Send the Trainees out in pairs to go shopping for their food items. Make sure they take a notebook for writing down new things they hear and experience. Tell them how long they have for the task and when you expect them back. You might prepare them and send them out in the morning and have them return in the afternoon.

GOING OUT AND DOING IT

BACK IN THE CLASSROOM (LEARNING FROM THE EXPERIENCE)

LANGUAGE EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES

Most likely the Trainees will come back excited about the experience, full of new and interesting things that happened to them. Your job is to help them talk about it in a way that will help them learn as much as possible from the experience about the language and the culture. Here are some ideas:

- Start by giving them about fifteen minutes to write in their language notebook. They can first review what they may already have written and then write down other new words and phrases they heard, things that happened that surprised them, and new questions they have about the language and culture.
- Give each pair of Trainees a large sheet of paper and have them write some of the language they used or heard. At this time, don't help them by making corrections or giving additional information.

- Post the papers, and let the Trainees walk around and look at them. Have them gather in front of each paper, in turn, and have the people who wrote it explain what is there. Invite the others to ask questions about the language (vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar). When a question is asked, see if one of the Trainees can answer it. If no one can answer it, then you give a short answer. Allow time for the Trainees to add or modify the language they wrote based on the discussions with the other groups.
- At this point you might want to make a master sheet of phrases that can be used to ask for the availability of an item as well as possible responses. Also begin collecting (or add to an existing list) ways to greet people. What did the Trainees hear people say as they passed them on the road?

CULTURAL EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES

Now turn the Trainees' attention to the cultural aspects of the experience.

- Ask them what it was like doing the exercise. How did you feel?
- What was the reaction of the people you talked to? Did they say or do anything that surprised, angered, confused or frustrated you? How did their behavior and manner compare with store clerks in America?
- How did the layout of the store compare with your home town? What about the items on the shelves? Prices? The way the items are displayed? How is perishable food stored? Similarities? Differences? Why are there shortages of some items? How do other customers in the store interact with each other/with you? How does the shopkeeper relate to you? Why do you think this is?

ABOUT HOW THE TRAINEES LEARNED

Ask the Trainees to think about how they learned what they learned by doing this activity. Ask them how they liked learning outside the classroom, on their own. Have them share the techniques that worked best for them. Have them talk about how they overcame their fear and nervousness. Ask them to share their notebooks. What did they write? Why? How might they use the notebooks better in the future?

FOLLOW UP

- Have the Trainees list the new words in their notebooks and write for five minutes about what they learned about Kiribati stores and any reactions they had to asking an I-Kiribati person for information.
- Bring all classes together and have them compare their shopping experiences and how they went about doing the activity. The Trainees can learn a lot from each other by talking about successful language learning strategies.
- Cook a meal together using the food the Trainees bought at the store. While cooking and eating the meal, help the Trainees to learn the words and phrases used for these activities.

SAMPLE SESSION PLAN

FAMILY TREE

OVERVIEW DESCRIPTION

This lesson is for when the Trainees are with host families. The Trainees talk with their families to find out the names of family members and their relationships. They return to the classroom to share their experiences with their classmates and to discuss what they learned from the experience about the family system.

PURPOSE

This is an activity for helping the Trainees get to know their families. In addition to learning the names of family relationships in a real situation, they will be able to share their family in the U.S. with their new family in country and learn about family structure in the new culture.

PREPARATION ADVANCE PREPARATION

The day before this lesson, tell Trainees to bring a photo of their family to class for the next day's lesson. (If they don't have a photo, they can draw a picture.)

CLASSROOM PREPARATION

1. Tell the Trainees that today they will be finding out the Kiribati names for common family relationships by drawing a family tree of their family in the U.S. They will then share their family photos with their host families. Tomorrow, everyone will return to the classroom to report to their classmates.

2. Once the Trainees understand the general idea, your job is to help them gain confidence in their ability to go out and do this task. Mainly, this means you will help them learn the words and phrases they need to get the information about the host families and to explain what they are doing. Help them to learn how to begin and end their conversations with the people they will be meeting in a culturally appropriate manner—that is, politely.

Follow this procedure:

- (a) Ask the Trainees to use their family pictures to tell the names and relationships of the people in their family.
- (b) Ask the Trainees to draw their family tree and tell you

the names of the relationships. Write the terms on the board in English. Encourage the students to find out the names of these terms in the language by asking you (the trainer) in the language : Who is this? Using the family tree, have students describe their family to each other in the language: "This is my mother. Her name is Carol," etc.

(c) Ask the Trainees what questions they want to be able to ask, to accomplish the task and write the questions on the board in English. For example:

This is my family. Can you show me your family?

Who is that?

What is her name?

Is that your sister?

(d) Then write the language on the board, but have the Trainees tell you the language—you tell them only when they can't get it themselves or when they are wrong (it is important for them to learn how to figure things out for themselves and how to help each other)

(e) Make a list on the board of the words and phrases the Trainees think they might hear as answers to these questions, and then write the language, as you did with the questions, above. For example:

This is my mother.

Her name is Anna.

I have three sisters and two brothers.

Tion is my oldest brother.

3. Help the Trainees learn how to say these questions easily and fluently. You might start with some simple repetition drills, for example, and then let them practice describing the family members to each other in pairs. The idea is for them to get to the point where they can make these new combinations of sounds and intonation patterns without stumbling. If they can do this in the classroom, with you, it will help give them the confidence they need to go out and do the task.

- Practice family vocabulary by doing substitution drills or by playing Concentration or Bingo. Have Trainees ask each other questions about their family members.

- Have the Trainees do an information gap with each other's family trees.

- Then have them role-play a conversation with you and in pairs with their classmates. This is to help them practice saying their questions and practice hearing the anticipated answers. Write what they say on the board; correct and add where necessary.

4. Now ask the Trainees what they will say before they ask their question and after they have gotten an answer, to end the exchange. Also, ask them what they will say if somebody asks them what they are doing or if they need to ask someone to slow down or to repeat something. At this point in the

training program they probably have already learned how to say these things. Help them to choose the best ones for this particular situation—and don't forget to remind them of a magic phrase or two that will help them end a conversation politely if they begin to feel they can't understand anything and have lost control of the situation. For example:

Excuse me.

May I ask you a question?

Will you help me, please?

Can you spell that, please?

Please repeat/speak more slowly.

I'm trying to learn _____.

Can you tell me about your family?

Thank you very much.

Sorry, I have to go back to class now.

5. Before sending the Trainees out, ask students to think for a few minutes about the following questions. Then share their answers as a group:

- When you use the word "family," whom do you include?
- What is the typical size family in the U.S.?
- Where were your parents and grandparents born?
- Is the way that your family lives and relates to each other similar to other families in the U.S.?

6. Ask them if they feel ready—give short answers to any last minute questions they might have. Give them a pep talk about how much fun they're about to have on this big adventure and how easy it's going to be. Remind them they have enough of the language to do the job and they have a partner with them to help. Tell them it's normal to feel a little anxious at a time like this. What's important is to maintain a sense of humor and look forward to surprises. Then, tell them to take a deep breath and go do it.

GOING OUT AND DOING IT

Send the Trainees to their host family homes to ask questions. Remind them to take the picture of their own family and family tree with them. Make sure they take a notebook for writing down new things they hear and experience. Tell them how long they have for the task and when you expect them back. You might prepare them and send them out in the afternoon and have them return the next morning.

BACK IN THE CLASSROOM (LEARNING FROM THE EXPERIENCE)

Most likely the Trainees will come back excited about the experience, full of new and interesting things that happened to them. Your job is to help them talk about it in a way that will help them learn as much as possible from the experience about the language and the culture. Here are some ideas:

LANGUAGE EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES

- Start by giving them about fifteen minutes to write down in their notebooks the new words and phrases they heard, things that happened that surprised them, and new questions they have about the language and culture.
- Give each Trainee a large sheet of paper and have him or her draw their host family's family tree and label the family members. At this time, don't help them by making corrections or giving additional information.
- Post the papers, and let the Trainees walk around and look at them. Have them gather in front of each paper, in turn, and have the people who wrote it explain their family members. Invite the others to ask questions about the language (vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar). When a question is asked, see if one of the Trainees can answer it. If no one can answer it, then you give a short answer. Allow time for the Trainees to add or modify the language they wrote based on the discussions with the other groups.
- At this point you might want to make a master list of family relationships. Also begin collecting (or add to an existing list) ways to control the conversation when you don't understand.

CULTURAL EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES

Now turn the Trainees' attention to the cultural aspects of the experience. Talk with them in English about the experience.

- Ask them what it was like doing the exercise. How did you feel?
- What was the reaction of the people you talked to? Did they say or do anything that surprised, angered, confused or frustrated you? How did their behavior and manner compare with the people where you come from?
- What did you learn about family relationships? Who is considered part of the family? How does this compare with the U.S.? How do members of the family relate to each other?

ABOUT HOW THE TRAINEES LEARNED

- Ask the Trainees to think about how they learned what they learned by doing this activity. Ask them how they liked learning outside the classroom, on their own. Have them share the techniques that worked best for them. Have them talk about how they overcame their fear and nervousness. Have them share their use of language learning notebooks.

FOLLOW UP

- Have the Trainees list the new words in their notebooks and write for five minutes about what they learned about Kiribati families and any reactions they had to asking the family for information.
- Bring all classes together and have them compare their family tree experiences and how they went about doing the activity. The Trainees can learn a lot from each other by talking about successful language learning strategies.

SAMPLE SESSION PLAN

LEARNING A CRAFT

OVERVIEW DESCRIPTION

This lesson is for host family stays or site visits. The Trainees go with a member of their host family to learn a skill such as weaving a mat, fishing or dancing. They return to the classroom to share what they have learned with their classmates and to discuss what they learned from the experience about the culture and language.

PURPOSE

This is an activity to be used during the PST village stay. Trainees will get to know their host families better and learn a skill that will help them better understand the culture. They will also learn how to control a conversation by asking questions to get more information and they will learn how to follow the Total Physical Response steps of observe, do with someone and do alone that they can use whenever they are learning some new skill.

CLASSROOM PREPARATION

1. Tell the Trainees that they will be going with their host families to learn a common craft. Class today will prepare them for learning this craft. Then they will share what they have learned about the language and culture with their classmates in a later class session.
2. Ask the Trainees what they already know about common crafts, but don't give them much information. Instead, help them to discover things on their own with their host families.
3. Once the Trainees understand the general idea, your job is to help them gain confidence in their ability to go out and do this task. Mainly, this means you will help them learn the words and phrases they will hear and want to use while learning the skill (mat making, etc.)
Follow this procedure:
(a) Ask the Trainees what questions they want to be able to ask in order to find out how to do the craft, and write the

questions on the board in English. For example:

Could you show me that again?

Like this?

What is that called?

I don't understand.

What do you do first, next...?

Please repeat.

(b) Then write the language on the board, but have the Trainees tell you the language—you tell them only when they can't get it themselves or when they are wrong. (It is important for them to learn how to figure things out for themselves and how to help each other.)

4. Help the Trainees learn how to say these questions easily, fluently. Show them how to do something (this task could be a typical cultural skill such as opening a coconut, repairing a fishing net, weaving a mat, doing a dance or any task which you can easily demonstrate in class. If they can do a task in the classroom, with you, it will help give them the confidence they need to go out and do another task with a family.

5. While you are teaching the task, have them ask the clarification questions they have just worked on. This is to help them practice saying their questions and practice hearing the anticipated answers. Remember that the focus is asking for clarification and recognizing answers, not producing the explanation for how to do the craft.

6. Also remind them that the family member may ask them some questions about themselves while they are learning the skill and that they may want to ask some questions to their teacher. Some possible questions and answers to work on are:

What is Peace Corps?

What is your job?

Tell me about your family.

How many (brothers, sisters) do you have?

How old are you?

How long will you stay here?

This is a good opportunity to teach or to review personal information questions both as questions and as answers.

7. Ask them if they feel ready—give short answers to any last minute questions they might have. Then send them out to learn their new craft. Remind them that it's going to be fun and easy and that they can do it.

GOING OUT AND DOING IT

Send the Trainees out with their hosts to learn a craft. Make sure they take a notebook for writing down new things they hear and experience.

BACK IN THE CLASSROOM (LEARNING FROM THE EXPERIENCE)

Most likely the Trainees will come back excited about the experience, full of new and interesting things that happened to them. Your job is to help them talk about it in a way that will help them learn as much as possible from the experience about the language and the culture. Here are some ideas:

LANGUAGE EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES

- Start by giving them about fifteen minutes to write down in their notebooks the new words and phrases they heard, things that happened that surprised them, and new questions they have about the language and culture.
- Give each Trainee a large sheet of paper and have them write or draw the steps in doing their craft. At this time, don't help them by making corrections or giving additional information.
- Post the drawings/descriptions. Have them gather in front of each one, in turn, and have the Trainee who drew it explain what is there. Invite the others to ask questions about the language (vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar). When a question is asked, see if one of the Trainees can answer it. If no one can answer it, then you give a short answer. Allow time for the Trainees to add labels to their drawings or make other changes based on the discussions with the other groups.

CULTURAL EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES

Now turn the Trainees' attention to the cultural aspects of the experience.

- Ask them what it was like doing the exercise. How did you feel? Nervous? Excited? Accepted?
- What was the reaction of the people you worked with? Did they say or do anything that surprised, angered, confused or frustrated you? How did their behavior and manner compare with people you know in your hometown?
- Ask Trainees to reflect on the skill they learned. What is the significance of it in Kiribati culture? Why do you think it is important? Why is it done the way it is? Is it learned by all members of society, or just some?

ABOUT HOW THE TRAINEES LEARNED

Ask the Trainees to think about how they liked learning by doing. Ask them if the questions and clarification phrases they learned helped them understand the procedures. Have them talk about how they overcame their fear and nervousness. Ask them how they used their language notebooks. Have them share with each other what they wrote down and why, as well as suggestions for using the notebook in the future.

FOLLOW UP

- Have the Trainees list the new words in their notebooks and write for five minutes about what they learned about crafts and any reactions they had to learning the craft from a host-country person.
- Have the Trainee brainstorm other crafts they might learn once they are in their own communities. What crafts could they teach to others?